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The world's most popular apps are not only completely free but it is very likely that you have been using one or more of them for years now, without really thinking about it. From Gmail to Trends, Google have been continually expanding their app suite with must-have tools. Did you know that you can also use Google to explore the earth, build yourself a blog, or plan your week? Google is about much more than search and this guide is here to help you discover just what you can do with these free, browser-based tools, products and services. Learn how to manage and share your images with Photos, discover the best way to configure your Gmail email account, find and download apps, music, books and movies easily on Google Play and take the first steps towards building yourself a free blog or Google Site. And this is just the start.

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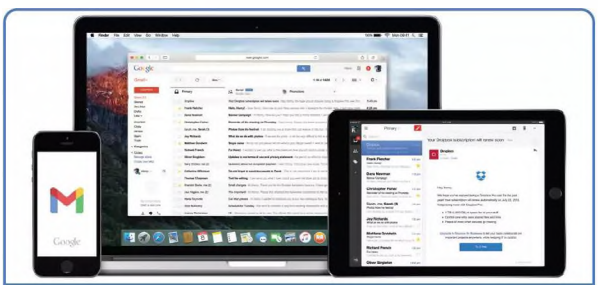
Google

Get Started With Google

There are many reasons (all of which are covered in this publication) to delve into the Google app suite. Yet before you start to explore these amazing tools and discover just how much you can do with them, you need to get to grips with the basics. What follows details how to set up your all-important Google account and also teaches you some important safety tips to ensure all of your online Google adventures are secure ones.

Google Account Set Up

In the past, using several different Google apps would have meant having several different usernames and passwords. Thankfully, Google took steps to merge all of these different accounts into one main Google account. This means that you only have to remember one username and password to access almost any Google product, plus it is much easier to share information, images and other data between your devices.



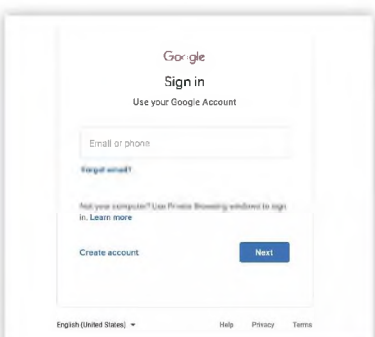
Use Across Devices

One of the regular questions we receive regarding Google's applications is: "Can I use my Google account sign in details on both my smartphone and my computer? Thankfully, the answer to that question is yes, follow the information below to set up your Google Account details and then you will be able to use them on all compatible devices and apps.

Creating a Google Account

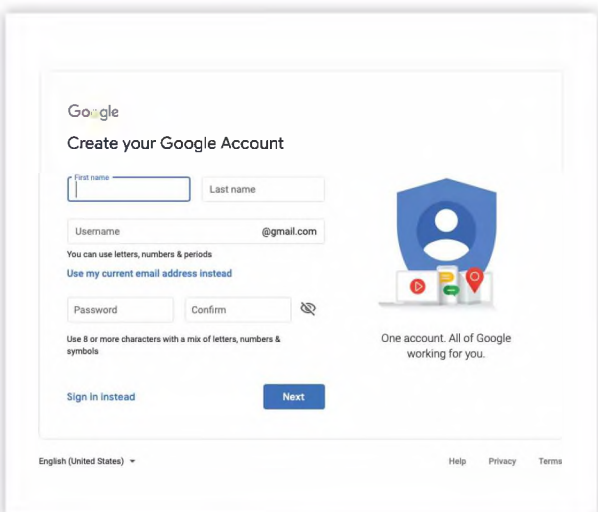
Step 1

Using any Internet browser, navigate to www.accounts.google.com and click on Create account in the bottom left corner of the screen. Now choose to set up either an individual or a business account.



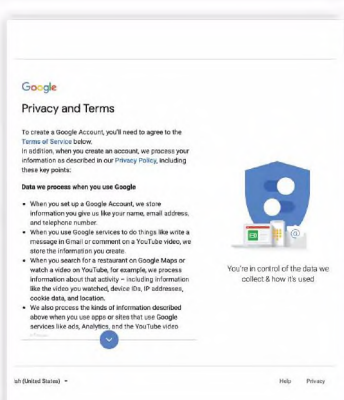
Step 2

Enter your name into the boxes provided and choose your preferred gmail.com email address. If the name you want is already taken, you will be shown some alternatives; or you can try another of your own.



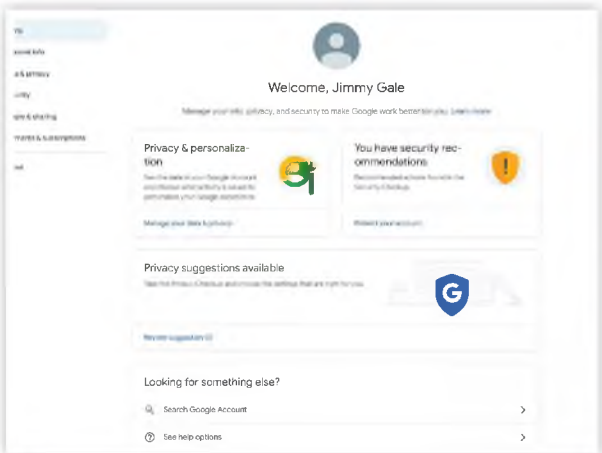
Step 3

Complete the remainder of the information, including a phone number and alternative email address. Next click Express personalisation and Confirm (We are going back to this later!) and agree to Google Terms of Service to progress forward.



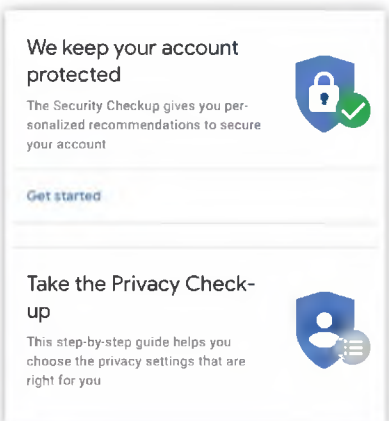
Step 4

After completing the initial sign up process, you are taken to the core My Account page. From this page you can customise your entire Google user experience as follows.



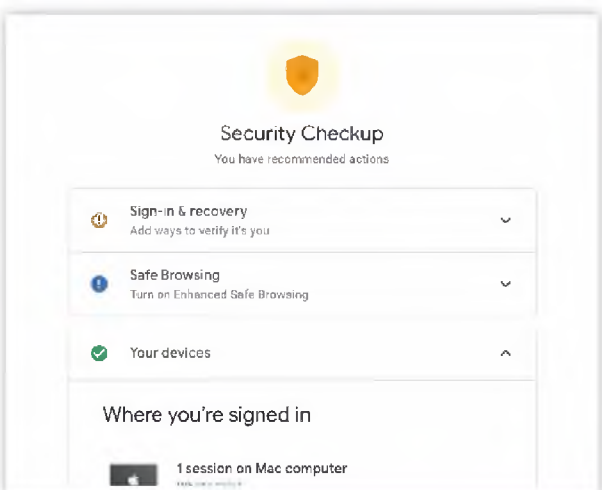
Step 5

Starting with the Protect Your Account option, you can, from here, check the activity of your account, confirming that you are the only user, list devices that are logged in via your account and explore recovery options.



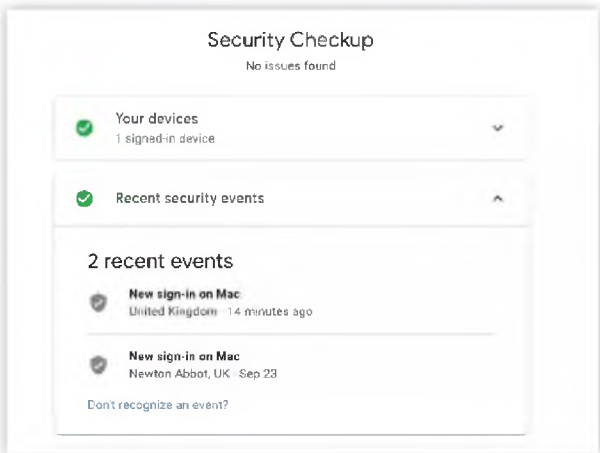
Step 6

There are key areas of the Security options available that can rapidly give you an insight into the uses of your account. Beginning with the Your Devices option, which is important.



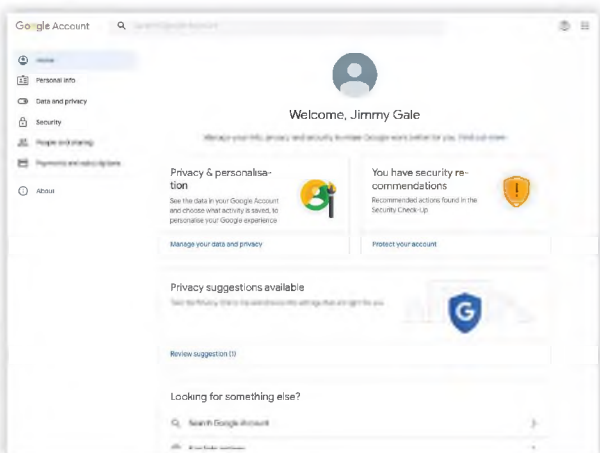
Step 7

These links show any devices that have, or are currently, accessing your account. If these details don't match yours, you can change your password via the Personal Info link.



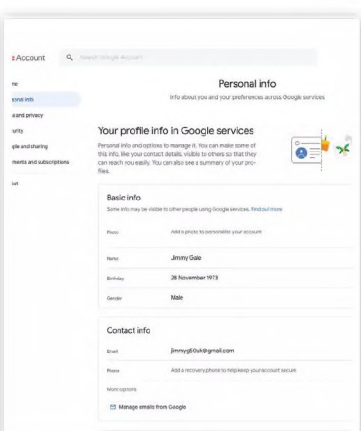
Step 8

Return to the Google account page where the next option, Privacy & Personalisation link, enables you to manage and edit all of your data and details used during this initial setup process.



Step 9

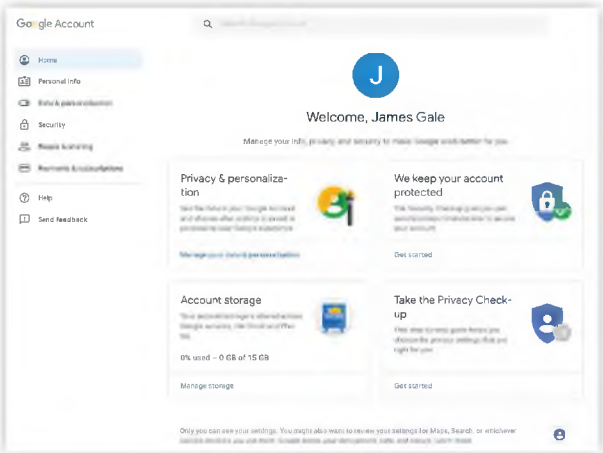
The Personal info link, left side bar, opens a page that holds a complete record of the information you have shared with Google. Check to ensure it is correct. Any issues are shown as a triangle symbol containing a "!" icon, click or tap to correct them.



Google Account Set Up cont.

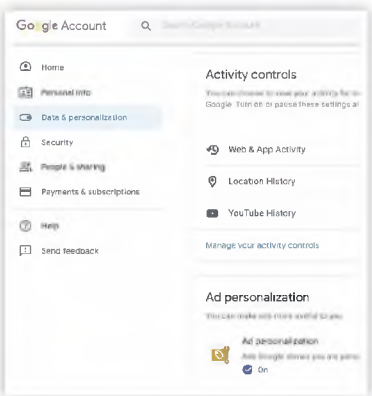
Step 10

For now, we are going to move past the Privacy & personalisation options as, due to their importance and complexity, they are covered in greater depth in this guide.



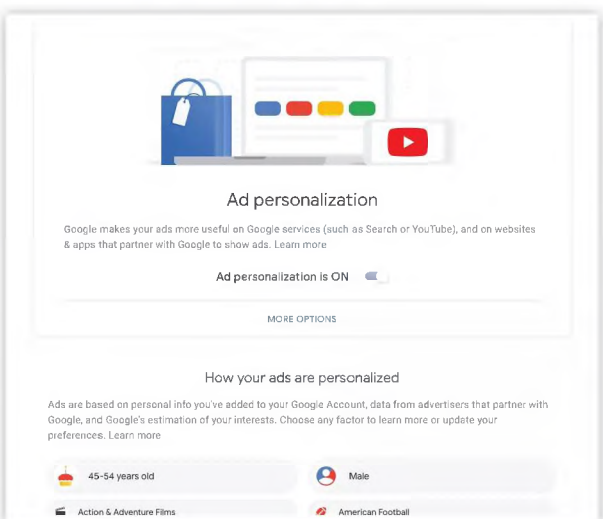
Step 11

Select the Data & personalisation option to view a quick access listing of all your current and historic Google uses. Each section acts as a shortcut link to the app itself, such as Gmail.



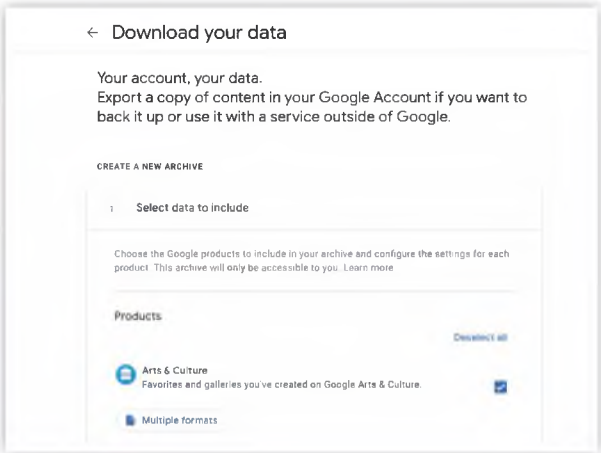
Step 12

Ad personalisation can't completely block any adverts from your Google experience but you can edit the type of adverts you are exposed to, by selecting the topics you like/dislike here.



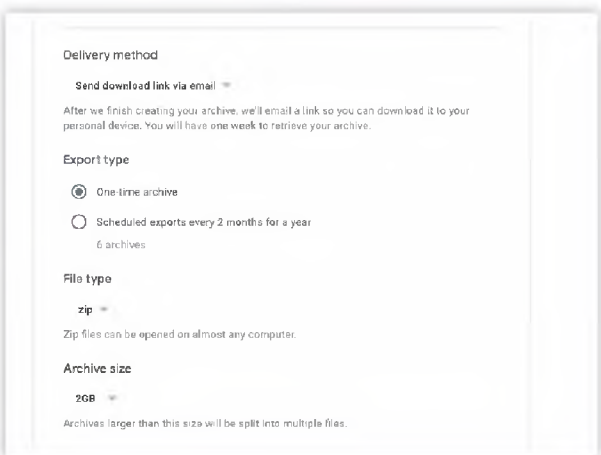
Step 13

You can download or transfer your Google account content such as Internet bookmarks, contents, stored files on Google Drive, etc., should you wish to close your Google account.



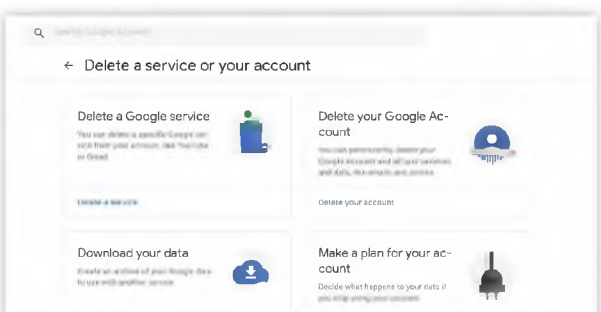
Step 14

Although better suited to a long term user, even as a new user it is advisable to keep an updated archive of your Google data and files should the worst happen to your hardware.



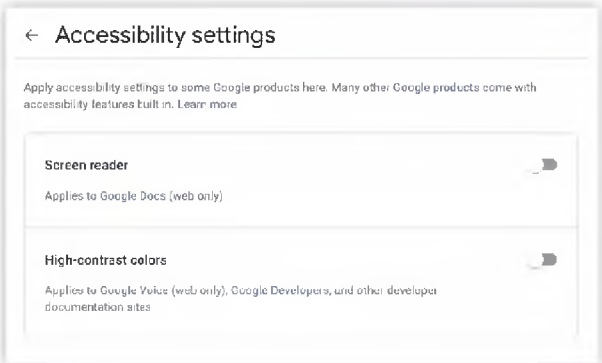
Step 15

Finally, we have the Delete a service or your account option. You can customise everything from how you use your Google account to ultimately deleting your Google account entirely.



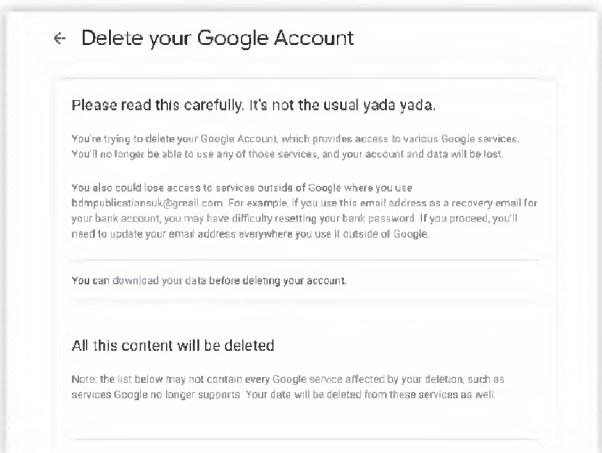
Step 16

You can change the language of your account using the Language & Input Tools and change the way Google is displayed via the Accessibility tools.



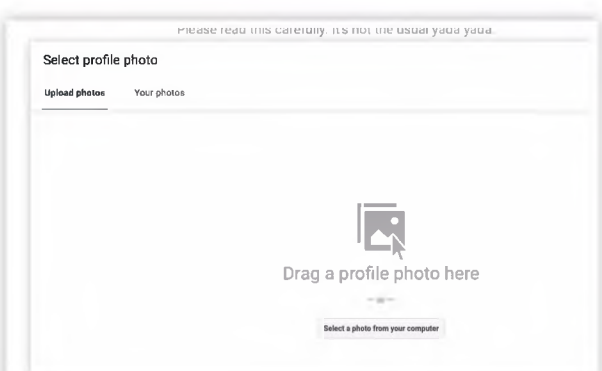
Step 17

If you wish to give up on Google, we would advise you not to, you can delete your apps and account itself by ticking the two Yes boxes at the bottom of this page.



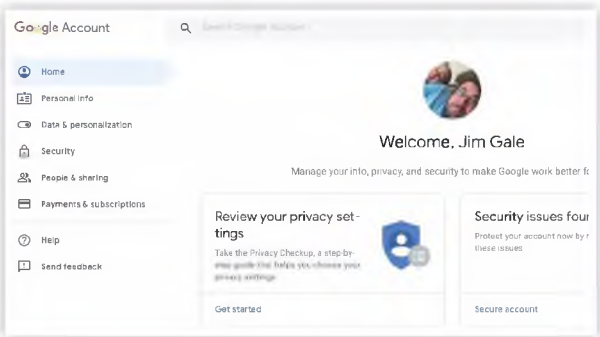
Step 18

Finally, return to the main Google accounts page. By tapping the icon, top right, you can add a profile picture if you wish. Having a profile picture of yourself will help friends and family find you on their own Google apps.



Step 19

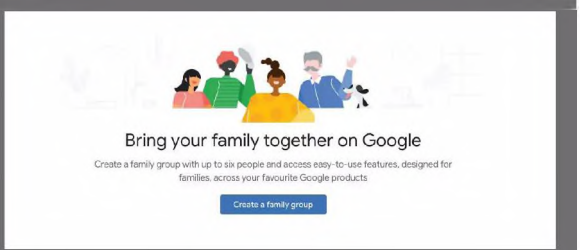
Having set up your Google account, you can return to check/change any settings via the account home page located at: myaccount.google.com.



Multiple Google & Family Accounts

It is possible to have more than one Google account and then sync those accounts across your private network of smartphones or tablets.

Adding and syncing a second account will not merge those two accounts anywhere but on your phone (and even here, only in certain apps). Nothing is ever synced between your Google accounts, allowing you to keep things nicely separate for personal and work accounts, for example. To add another account via your phone or tablet, go to Settings > Accounts and then tap the Add Account button. This screen shows all accounts associated with the device. Choose what sort of account you wish to add from the options on the screen; as you can see, it is not just multiple Google accounts that you can add. Next, let's set up a Family Group account.



From the People and Sharing link on your Google Account homepage, click on the Family Sharing link. From here you will able to add a further five family members to your account. You will need to set yourself up as the Family manager and you can start the set up process. NOTE: Each family member will need to have a Google Account of their own. Use this account to invite them to join your Family Group using the Send Invitation link. Once accepted you will be able to share your choice of files, content and media with your Family Group.

Improving Your Google Security

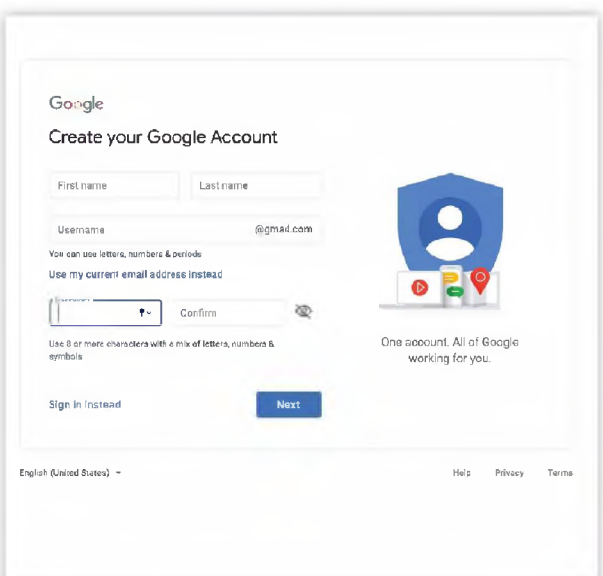
Keeping yourself and your family safe whilst using your Google apps is just as important as it is when you are sharing your details and your files online. That said it doesn't need to be difficult. While using the Internet and social networks can have its problems, you can reduce them to a minimal level by following a few simple pieces of advice.

Online Passwords

If you are anything like us, the number of passwords that you need to remember grows on an almost daily basis and because of this, it can be tempting to use the same or similar passwords for several different websites. This is a bad idea, particularly if your chosen password is something easy to guess such as your name or date of birth. Here are a few tips to consider when creating passwords.

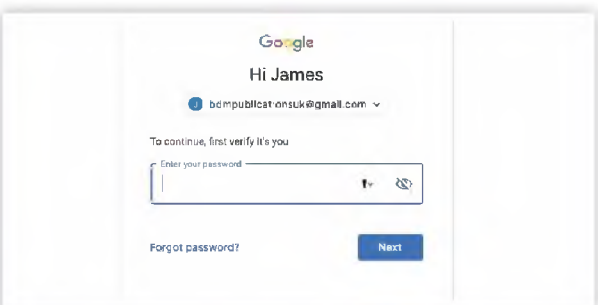
Keep them Unique

Having a unique password for each website you are required to log in to is a very good idea, particularly for things like email and online banking. Although security on a banking website is likely to be very good, if you use the same password on a website with less stringent security, you risk it being compromised on one and used to gain access to the other. It is not unusual for criminals to harvest passwords from a weak website and then randomly try them on more secure sites.



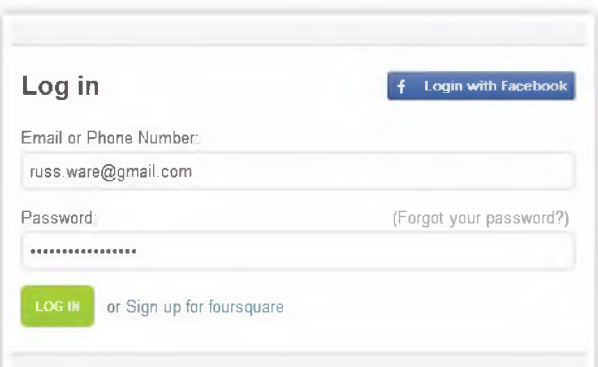
Keep them Random

Try to avoid using anything that is easy to guess, including personal information like your name, date of birth or address. These things are all very easy to discover and often the first things someone will try to get into your accounts. Also avoid, if possible, using real words or sequential strings of numbers, e.g. 123456789 or ABCDEFGHI etc.



The Longer, the Better

Short passwords are much easier to crack than long ones, so be sure to avoid anything less than eight characters and, if possible, go for something ten characters long at least. There are 4000 times more possible combinations of ten letters and numbers, than there are for eight letters and numbers. Most good websites require at least 8 character passwords nowadays.

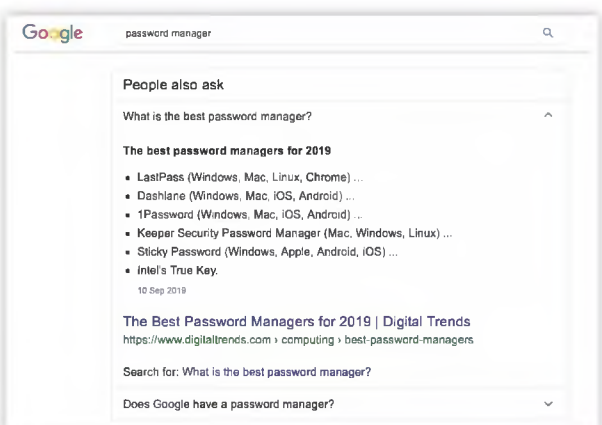


Mix it Up

Once you start adding in symbols and mixed case letters, along with numbers, into your passwords, the possible variations rise to over six quadrillion (for an eight character password). The password A1z7yDbP is many thousands of times more secure than a1z7ydbp.

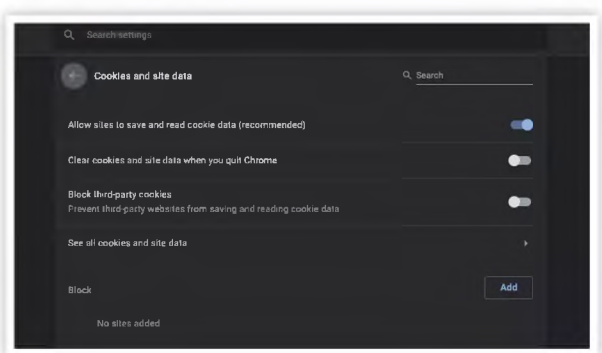
Use a Password Manager

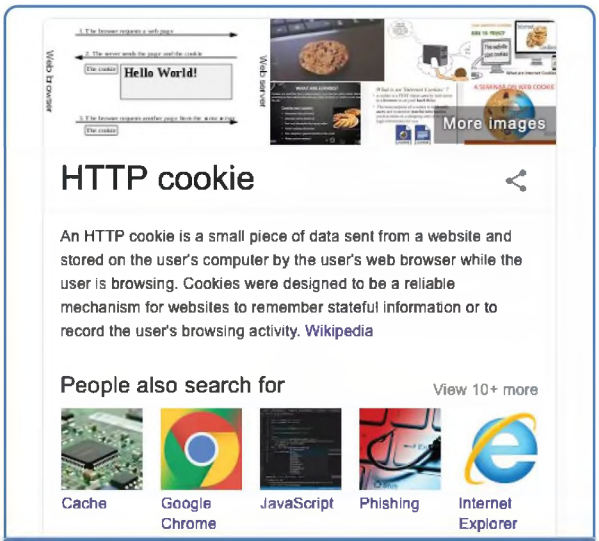
For most people, keeping a written list of their passwords is perfectly okay as long as you make sure that it is not left in plain sight on your desk, etc. Even keeping a text document on your computer with your passwords listed is not usually a risk. Just don't call the file 'Passwords' and leave in on the desktop. A much safer way, however, is to use a good Password Manager. These simple bits of software let you store your passwords in a locked file on your computer. Just as long as you have a very good password to get into the manager, your other passwords will be safe. You then only need to remember one password, instead of 10 or 20.



Enable/Disable Cookies in Chrome

To disable cookies in Chrome web browser, click the Three dots icon or Menu button in the top right corner of the browser window. Select Settings, scroll to the bottom and click Advanced settings. Now click Site settings, in the Privacy section, and then Cookies.



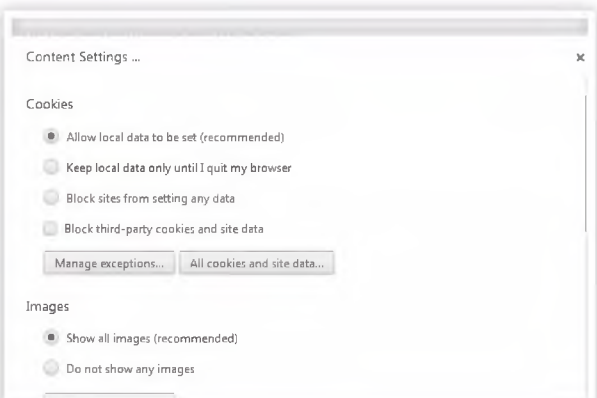


What are Cookies?

Cookies (or HTML Cookies) are small files used by websites to recognise individual users (or rather, recognise their computer). When you visit a website, a cookie is stored in a temporary folder on your computer. When you next visit that site, the cookie will be checked for. Different sites use cookies to store different information but a good example is information in a form being automatically filled when visiting a site you have used recently to order something.

Almost all modern browsers, including Internet Explorer, Chrome and Safari, allow you to block cookies from being downloaded. However, it is worth remembering that many websites now need cookies to work properly, and so blocking them could mean your browsing experience is a frustrating one. Cookies are nothing to be afraid of, they are simply used to make the Internet work better.

Select Allow local data to be set to allow both first-party and third-party cookies. If you only want to accept first-party cookies, check the box next to "Block all third-party cookies without exception."



Cyber Bullying

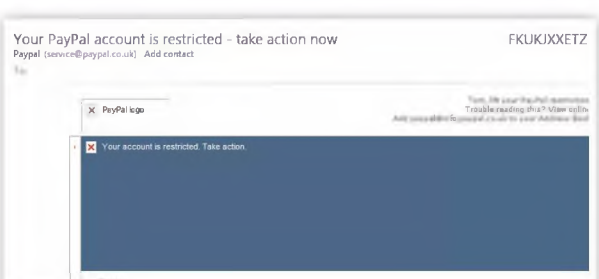
Sadly, bullying isn't confined to the playground or classroom any more. Cyber bullying is when a child, or even an adult, is bullied via text message, email, social networks or other online means.

The best way to deal with a cyber bully on a social network is to simply block that person, or not accept the friend request of someone who bullies you in real life. Although it may be tempting to reply to rude or abusive comments, etc. it is usually better to just ignore the person. In some cases, bullies have created fake accounts on social networks, pretending to be their victim. If you discover someone has created an account pretending to be you, report it immediately to the network's administrators. There is usually a Report button on the user profile page.

What is Phishing?

Phishing is the process of trying to find private information such as PIN numbers, passwords and usernames by trickery. Sometimes spammers create fake websites that look like the Facebook login page. When you enter your email and password on one of these pages, the spammer records your information and keeps it.

When someone has been phished, their account will often start automatically sending messages or links to a large number of their friends. These messages or links are often advertisements telling friends to check out videos or products. If you think your friend's account was phished, tell them to change their password and run anti-virus software on their computer.



Social Networks – Advice for Parents

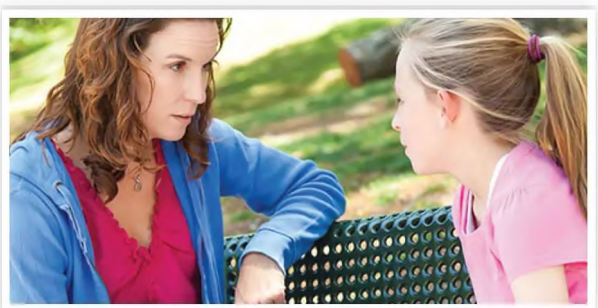
Being parents ourselves, we understand the pressure that many people feel to let their children use the Internet and social networks in particular. Many social networking sites, including Facebook, don't allow children under 13 years of age to have accounts. Unfortunately there is little they can do to stop a child below that age entering false details. Rather than a blanket ban on using the Internet and social networks, and potentially have your child visit them behind your back, perhaps a better way to keep your child safe online is to understand the dangers yourself and make sure your children understand them as well.

Do Some Research

Hopefully, if you are reading this, you already want to learn more about social networking and networks. This guide is a great place to start increasing your understanding of what you can do (and therefore what your child can do) on sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Google+. Read as much as you can about the networks your children use and remember that one of the best sources of information is often the children themselves.

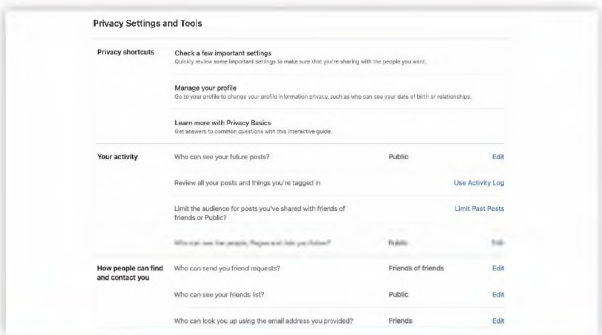
Get Involved

Take the next step and create an account for yourself on the social networks your child uses. This not only helps you to understand how things work and what features could be a potential problem but it also allows you to more easily see what your child is doing on there. You will be far better informed when asking questions about the site.



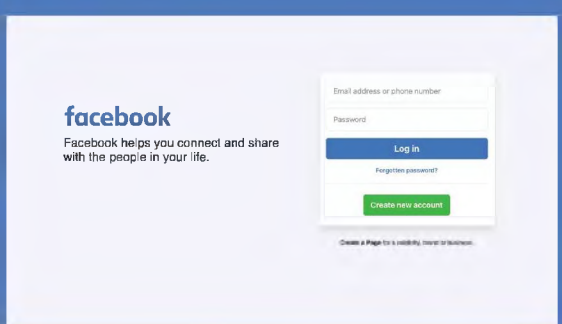
Privacy Settings

Nearly all the well known social networking sites offer several levels of privacy settings. Ensure your child selects the strongest privacy setting available when they create their account. This will help to make sure that their personal information is only seen by people they want to share it with. Be aware, however, that some sites are totally open to the public.



Internet Safety Tips

- Make sure that your child doesn't publish personal information like their location, email address, phone number or date of birth.
- Make sure they are very careful about what images and messages they post, even among trusted friends: once they are online they can be shared widely and are extremely difficult to get removed.



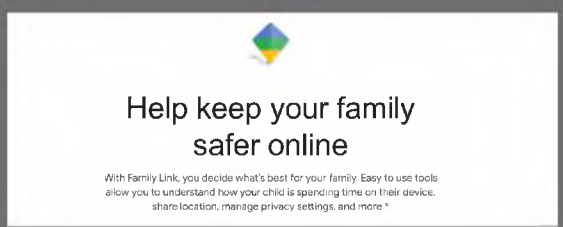
- Encourage your child to talk to you if they come across anything they find offensive or upsetting. Keep a record of anything abusive or offensive they've received and report any trouble to the site management: most sites have a simple reporting procedure, normally activated by clicking on a link on the page.
- If your child makes an online friend and wants to meet up with them in real life, you should go along with them to check the person is who they say they are.
- Tell them to be aware of online scams. Offers which seem too good to be true usually are. Make them aware also that clicking links they are unsure about can be unwise.

Using Family Link

Family link is a fantastic mobile and web app that allows parents to monitor and manage their children online, habits and most important their mobile security. What follows is a brief guide on how to set up and use it.

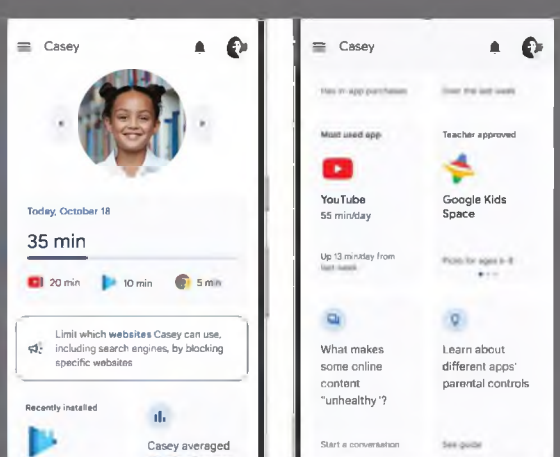
Step 1

Firstly install the Family Link app for your child's smartphone, it is compatible with Android and iPhone and is listed on both Google Play and the App Store.



Step 2

You will now need to input the Google Account that is linked to your child's device into the app on your device. If they don't have an account you can set one up here. This will generate a code that you will need to enter into your child's Family Link app on their device, tap Join.



Step 3

On your child's device you can now select which apps, features and uses you wish to monitor via your device using parental controls. Once you have made your choices, you will be notified of any changes/uses that apply to your choices above.

Step 4

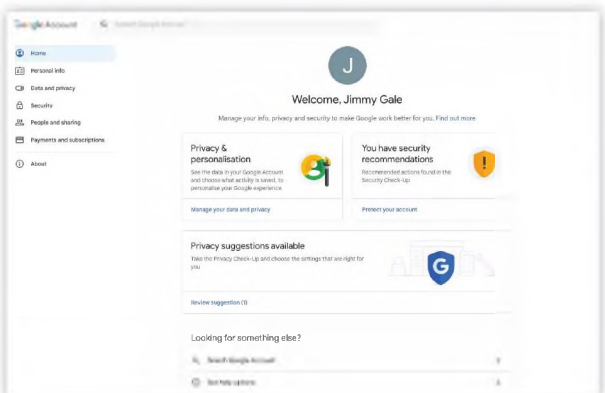
You are now able to make the decision should your child wish to install new apps, set screentime limits, apply age rating settings to the devices use and even monitor their location and the device's battery power.

Protecting Your Privacy on Google

Online privacy is an extremely important issue when it comes to using your Google apps. Google has included a comprehensive privacy tool to help you take control of, and monitor, how the company uses your information. This guide will reinforce your privacy rules when using Google.

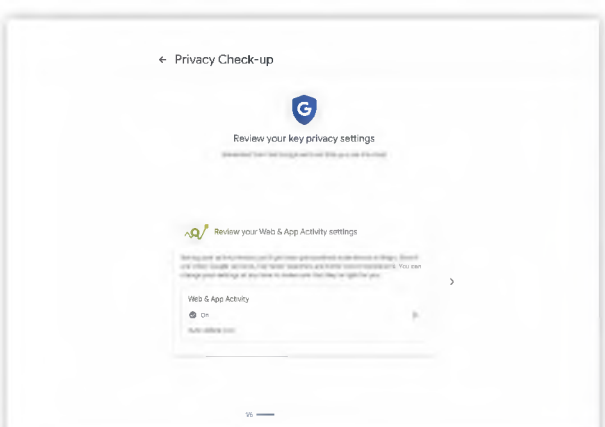
Step 1

Start by opening your main Google Accounts page, this can be accessed by entering https://myaccount.google.com into a browser. From the main account home page, you're able to check on the current levels of privacy, information and security.



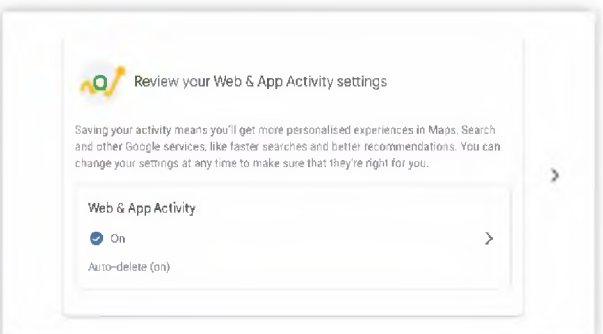
Step 2

The Privacy suggestions available/Privacy Check Up box, located in the bar below the top two links, is a good place to start. What follows is a scrollable selection of options that will help you choose your customised privacy settings.



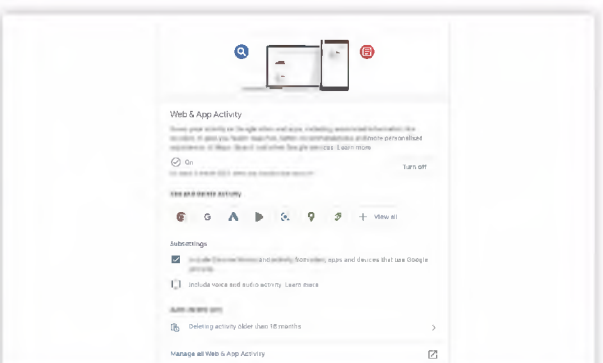
Step 3

The Privacy Check-Up section is broken down into six sub-categories, offering you the chance to review the key settings that determine how Google controls its activity toward you, what ads are displayed, how others will connect to you, what privacy settings are available and what you share with Google themselves, starting with Web & App Activity.



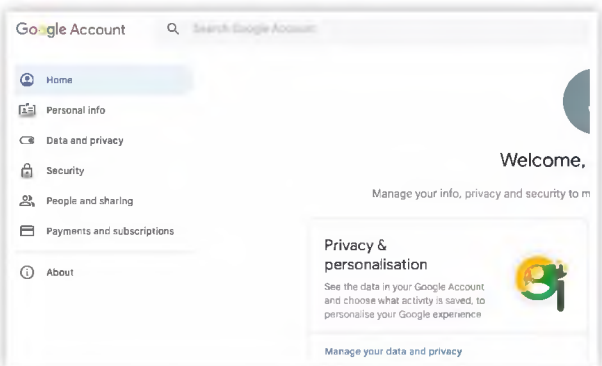
Step 4

The category options are displayed as tick boxes, so, using the Web & App category as the example, you're able to control how your web searches, sites visited history and remain private, or are available to Google. Read each element of the categories carefully to enhance or lower your online privacy. We suggest turning everything off to start to see how it effects your use.



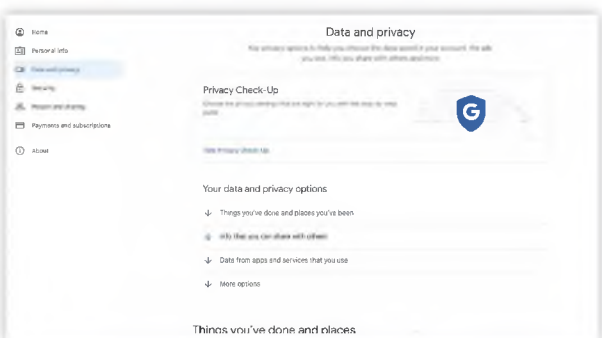
Step 5

Going back to the main Google Account home page, by first clicking the back arrow and then Home on the left column, take a moment to look through the other options available. Check on the Privacy & Personalisation box; click the Manage your Data & Personalisation link in the bottom of the box.



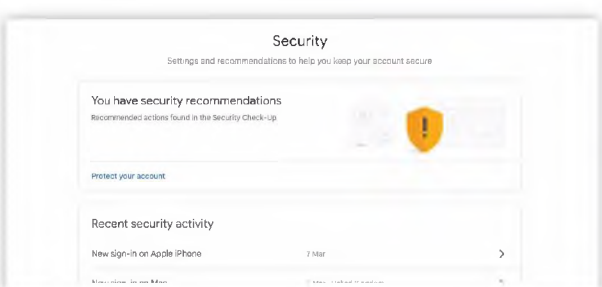
Step 6

The Data & Personalisation category is quite expansive and covers a lot of the content that transpires between you and Google's many services and apps. Each area within this category can be expanded further, such as Location History and so on. It's important to take the time to trawl through these sections to fine-tune your privacy settings.



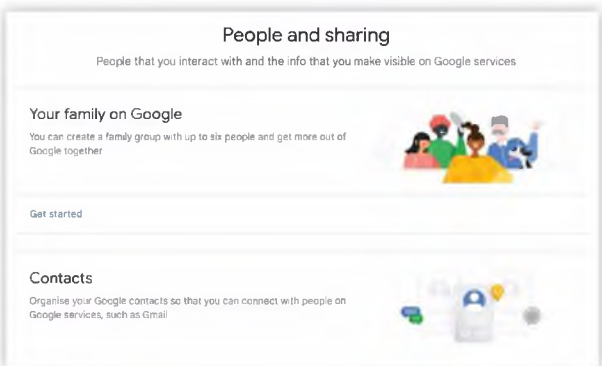
Step 7

To the left you'll see the quick access column, where you're able to navigate back to the Account Home page; click on the Security link. This will open the Security page where, in the event of someone gaining access to your Google password, you're able to lock down your account. Here you can opt for 2-Step Verification, create an Account recovery option and protect its privacy.



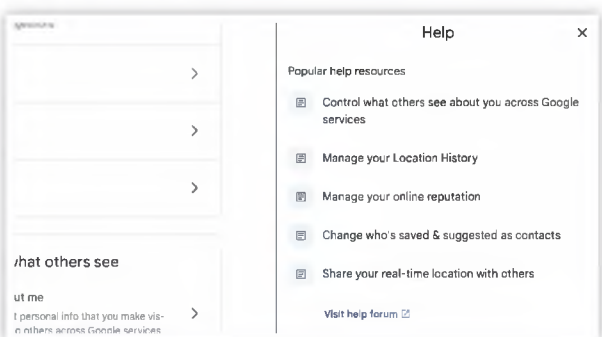
Step 8

The People & Sharing option, found via the left-hand column again, is also worth investigating. In here, you're able to define your contacts, block any users and, most importantly, manage your location sharing, as well as choose what personal info about you is visible to others across the Google services.



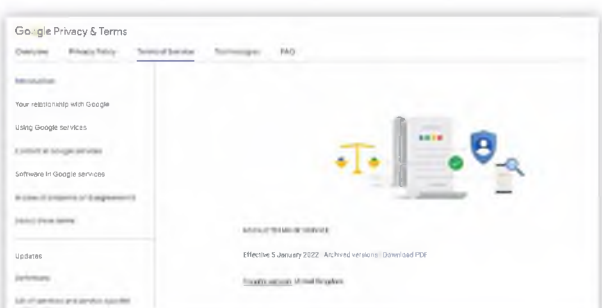
Step 9

Finally we have the Payments and Subscriptions option, here you can check that your Google Account is secure and not being used by a third party! If you ever become confused over anyof this information, or simply don't know where to turn next, the Help option will walk you through common issues and offer guided steps on how to proceed.



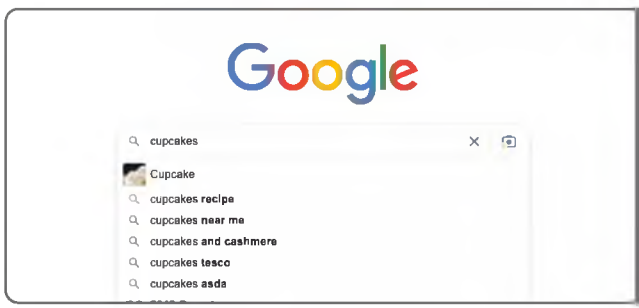
Step 10

One final aspect of privacy that's worth looking up is the Google Privacy & Terms. These are in a constant state of flux and will change depending on the laws of the country in which you're currently resident. Navigate to https://policies.google.com/privacy, to view the latest Google Privacy Policy.



Improving Your Google Searches

Google has the ability to search through billions of pages to supply you with the most relevant results for any search you desire. Google has different versions for different countries and, while they all work in basically the same way, by using the version for your home country you can be sure of both local and international results.



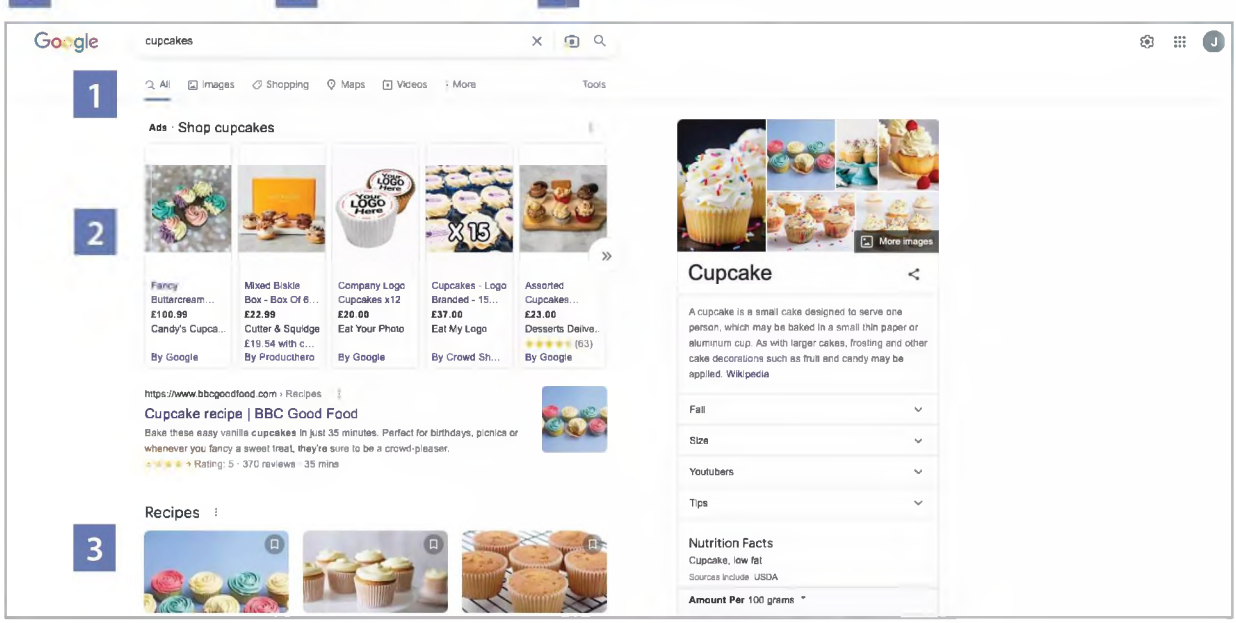
Google Search

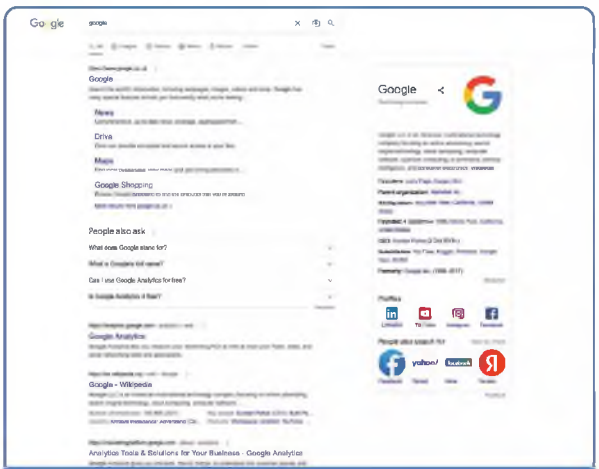
Searching with Google is easy! You simply enter your search term, e.g. "cupcake recipes", on the Google page for your country and click the search button. Google will then display the results of the search in order of relevance. There are, however, several ways to refine and target your search for even better results.

Understanding Google Search Results

When you perform a search on Google the results are split into two categories: Paid and Organic results. Paid results can be thought of more like adverts, with their position on the results page determined by how much the advertiser has paid. The organic results are those which are most relevant, respected or popular for your search term.

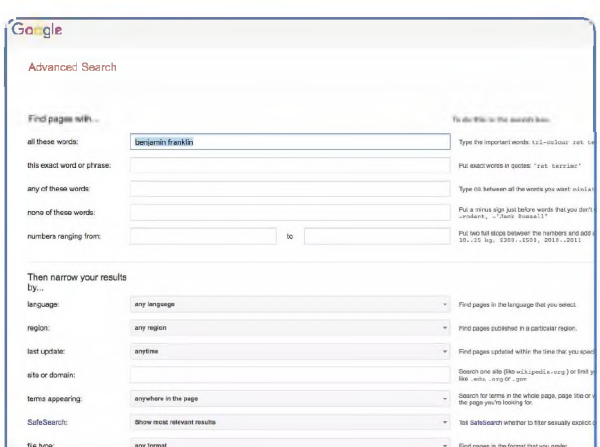
1 Search Options **2** Paid Results **3** Organic Results





The Knowledge Graph

Certain search terms (people, places or animals, for example) will activate the Google Knowledge Graph. This boxout, shown on the left of the standard search results, highlights facts, photos and other snippets of information about your search. Use this section to find quick information and facts about the subject or to start exploring related subjects. Knowledge Graph results are gathered from a variety of sources, including Wikipedia, World Bank, Freebase and Weather Underground, to name but a few.



Advanced Search

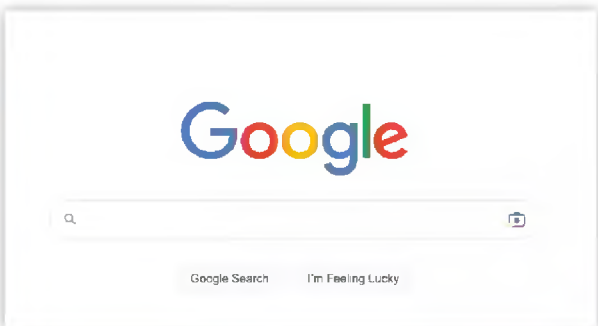
After searching, while on the results page, notice the Settings link under the search bar. Clicking this allows you to select Advanced Search from the dropdown menu. On the advanced search screen you can refine your search even further so that the results only show pages which feature all the words in your search term, or by country and language. Once you have selected your advanced search options, scroll to the bottom of the page and click the blue Advanced Search button.

Searching Images and Videos

As well as being able to search for text in web pages, you can also search for images and videos amongst other things.

Step 1

Open the Google search page for your country in your Internet browser. To perform a standard search, type your search term in the box and click Google Search.



Google Lens Search

To access the desktop version of this fantastic mobile app, visit image.google.com Click on the "Search by Image" camera icon on the search bar and drag and drop or locate the image you wish to use. Once this image has been uploaded, Google Search will display said image on the right of the screen with your search options/tools. These tools are displayed at the bottom of the screen, comprising of Search, Text and Translate. Let's start with the former. Having selected from the above you can then use the entire image or choose to focus on a key area of the image by clicking directly on this point. You can also move the focus frame over the image to focus on other key points you wish to search for. The results of the image search is displayed on the left side of the screen in the familiar Google search manner.

By clicking the Text option at the bottom of the screen, you will be able to highlight any text that is displayed on the main image and drag and drop it to the left side of the screen. This acts like a regular manually inputed text search with the results shown below. You can also copy the selected text via the Copy link and paste it into the search bar manually.

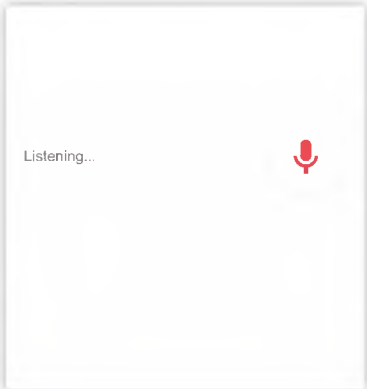
Finally the Translate option will translate any on screen text into the language of your choice using the controls at the top of the right side screen. The translated text will appear in full on the left side of the screen. Here you can choose to Select all, Listen or Open in Translate. The latter will open the text in the Translate web app, while Listen will translate the text to audio and play out loud and Select all enables you to manually cut and paste the text into another app.

Get Started with Google

Searching Images and Videos cont.

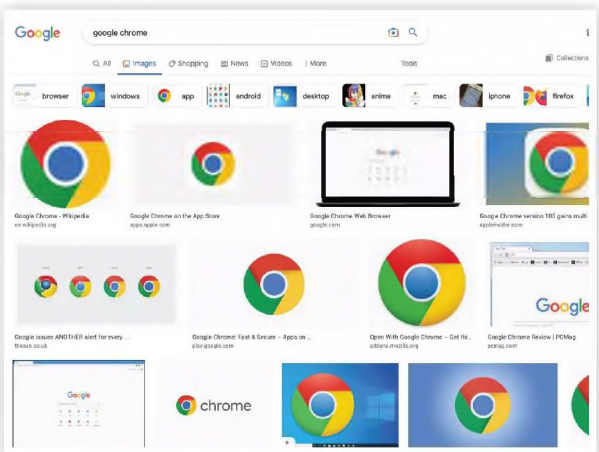
Step 2

To perform a Voice search, using dictation, click the Microphone icon on the right side of the Search bar and then simply say the subject you wish to search for on this screen, your speech will appear on screen and the search will start.



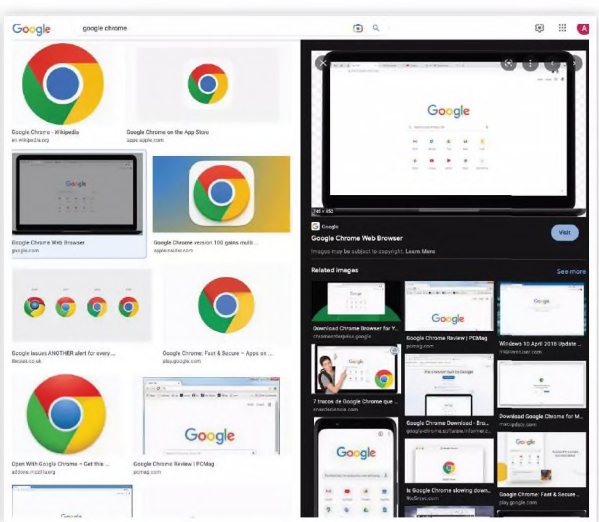
Step 3

The results will now be displayed on screen. At the top of the results page there are several links including Maps, News and Images. Click on the Images link.



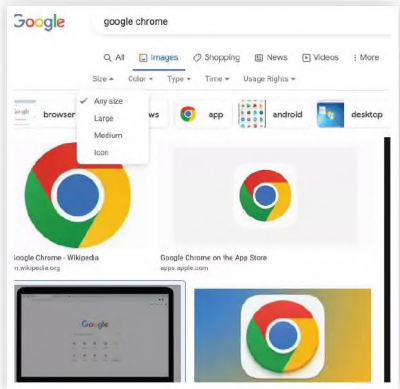
Step 4

Image results for the original search term will now be displayed. Move the mouse over any of the images to see a short description, image dimensions and other image details.



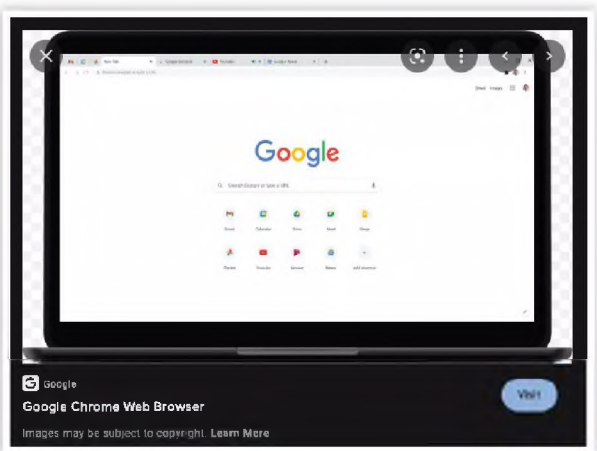
Step 5

Alongside the search links (Web, Images, etc.) you will see a link for Search Tools. Clicking this will allow you to further refine your search by image size, date it was uploaded and image type.



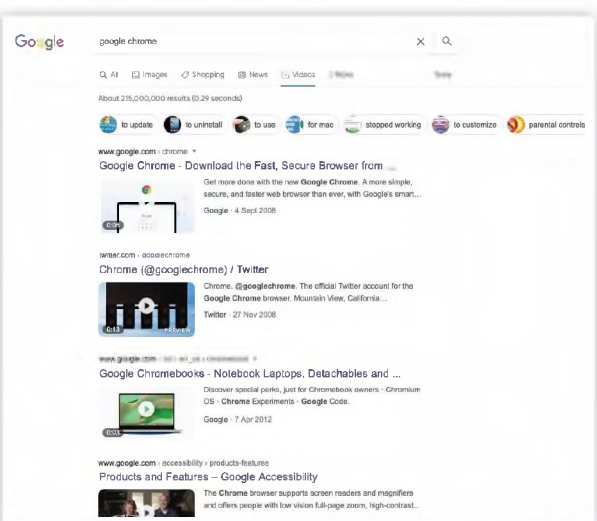
Step 6

Clicking on the image will open it at a larger size and also display a link that will allow you to open the web page where the image was found. Click the image again to close it.



Step 7

To search for videos instead of images, click the More link and then select Videos from the menu that drops down. Videos have their own search tools, including duration and quality.

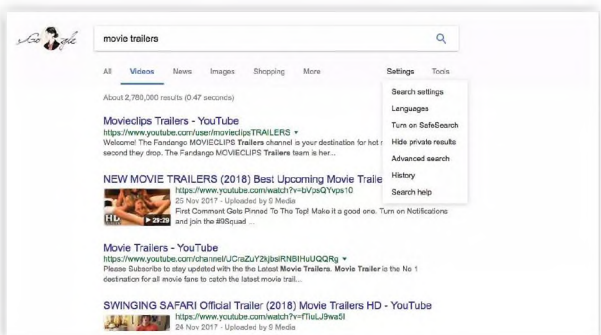


Safe Search

Google features a Safe Search option which allows you to select the age rating of the search results. This applies to web search results, as well as images, videos and books and can help to remove sexually explicit content. No filter is 100 per cent accurate, but Safe Search should help you avoid most of this type of material.

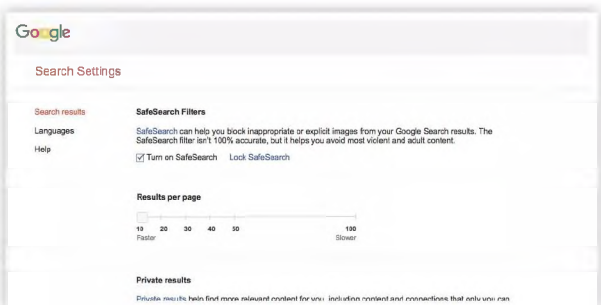
Step 1

Perform a search and check the results. If there are websites listed that you think are inappropriate, click the Setting link in the top right beneath the search bar and select Search Settings.



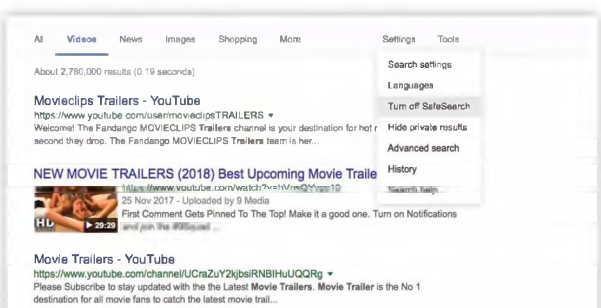
Step 2

At the top of the search settings screen you should see a Safe Search on/off link. Click the turn on Safe Search link to activate it. You can lock Safe Search on by selecting this option too.



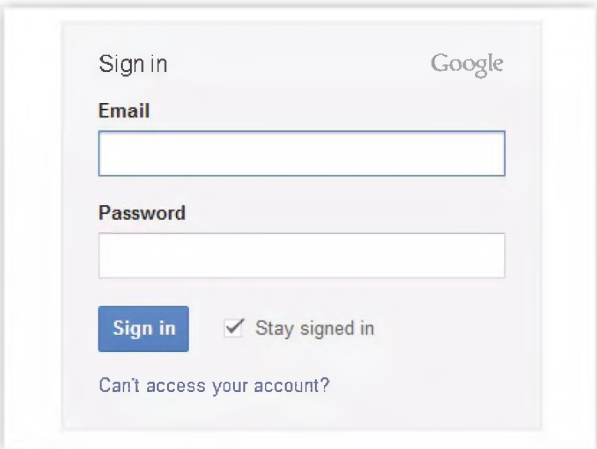
Step 3

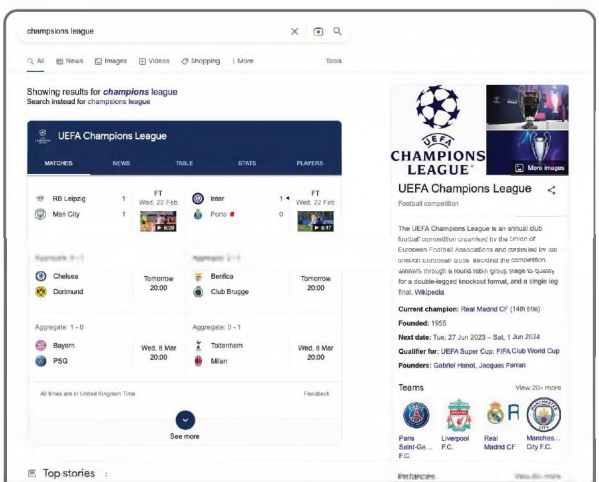
If you want the page to display all results, regardless of content, DO NOT activate Safe Search. If you have changed your mind you can deactivate via the Settings link.



Step 4

Your browser should remember the setting when you next use Google search. If you want to make sure that the safe search setting is not changed, you will have to sign in to a Google account.





Instant Updates

Based upon your search results, you will receive additional information that is relevant to the subject. For this example we searched for a sports team and results also shows their latest fixtures and results.
Specific search results also contain a downward pointing arrow at the end of the web link, click to show these.

Cached: Google trawls the web and takes snapshots of each page. When you click Cached, you will see the web page as it looked when last indexed by Google. The "Cached" link won't appear for sites that haven't been indexed or for any sites whose owners requested that their content isn't cached.

Similar: Click Similar to see other websites that are related to that result.

Advanced Google Search

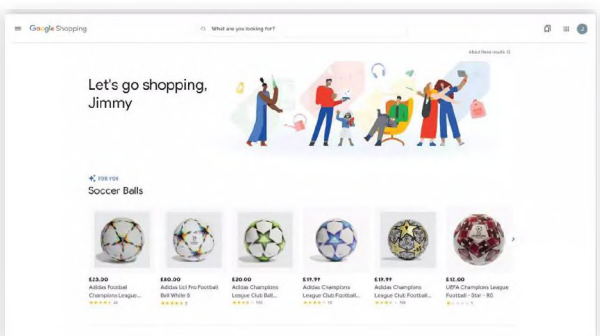
There are several specialised search tools, letting you cut through all the unwanted information and just see results from, for example, blogs, shopping sites or scholarly papers. You can access these search pages at any time from the Chrome browser or Google Home page.

Shopping Search

This feature allows you to search only shopping results for any term you enter into the search box on Google.

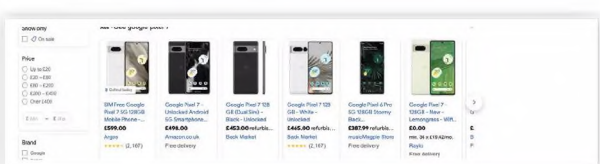
Step 1

You can open the Shopping search screen by typing www.google.co.uk/shopping into your browser address field. Your browser should automatically detect your location and filter any results to your own currency.



Step 2

You will see that the shopping search screen is very different from a standard Google search screen, with products shown in sections such as electronics, clothing and even as specific as Nexus 7. What is shown depends on what items are found in your search history in Google.



Step 3

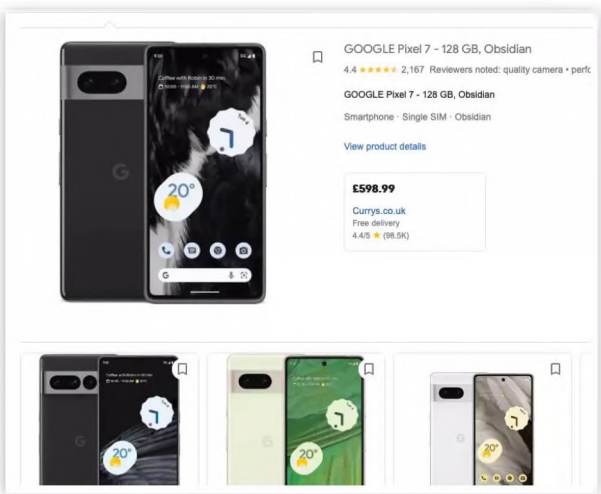
Clicking on one of the products shown will display a list of results for that type of product. Alternatively, you can type a search term into the search field at the top in Google.

Step 4

Once the results are shown, you will see that there are several filters down the left-hand side of the screen. These allow you to filter results by specific manufacturer, price, size (depending on the product type) and several others.

Step 5

Click the title of a product you are interested in and a box will expand to show more information, including a range of prices. You can then add the item to a shortlist by clicking the Shortlist button. This allows you to refer back to it easily later.



Step 6

If you click the product title a second time when the box is open, it will expand into a full screen page. This page lists all available prices and sellers, along with reviews of the product if they are available online.

Step 7

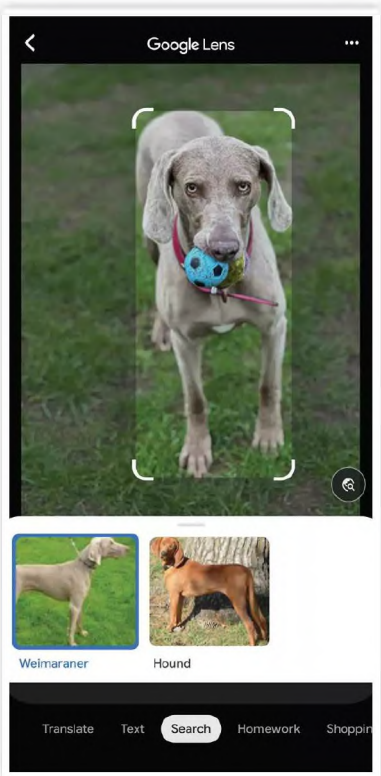
You can click directly to the item, via your preferred retailer, by clicking the link from the list at the bottom of the page. NOTE: On rare occasions the price linked may not match that of the retailer, so take care to check.

How to Use Google Lens Mobile

Google Lens is a fantastic addition to the App Suite, offering functionality on both your mobile and desktop devices. We will be looking at the mobile version, explaining the core functionality and why you really need to download this from your choice of app store right away.

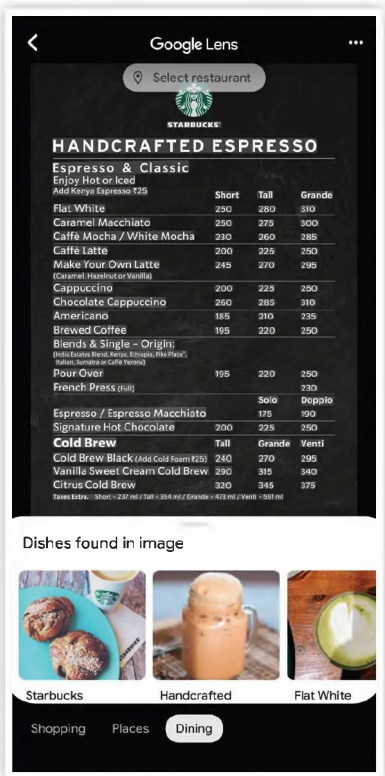
Using Google Lens on your Smartphone

Using your mobile device's camera you are able to access this unique alternative to the traditional Google search engine entry. So let's take a step into the future of online searches. Keyboards? We don't need keyboards where Google is going!



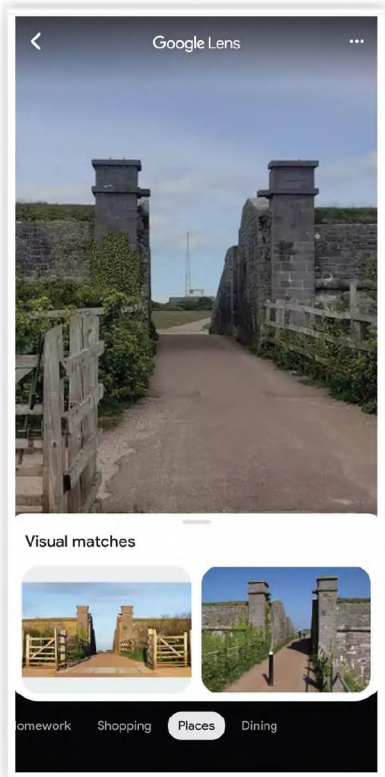
Step 1

At the base of the app UI, you will find your search options; Translate, Text, Search, Homework, Shopping, Places and Dining. To select your choice, simply scroll them, stopping on your choice. Let's start with Search. This is simply Google search and will find you information on your camera's target.



Step 2

Moving on to Dining, this feature will show you images and give detail on items found on a menu (as shown above). Homework is a unique feature that will help the user find the solution to basic Math's problems. Shopping links you to purchase links for the item you have captured on your camera app.



Step 3

Places links your camera view finder to your location giving you background and details on it. Translate and Text will pull text based content from your camera lens, which can be translated into an array of languages or use it as a search term. NOTE: Your search data will be saved to your Google search history.

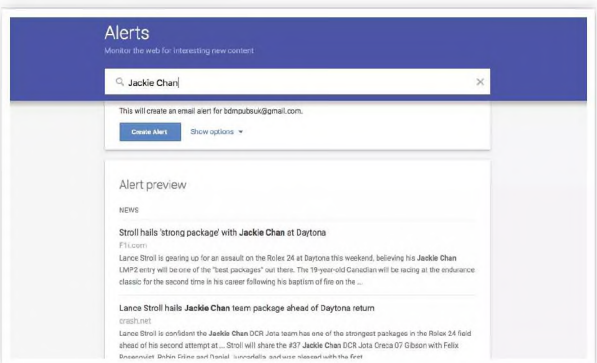
How to Create Google Alerts

You can use Google Alerts to monitor anything on the web and then have links to any matching content sent directly to your email address each day, or when new content is available.

Setting Up Alerts

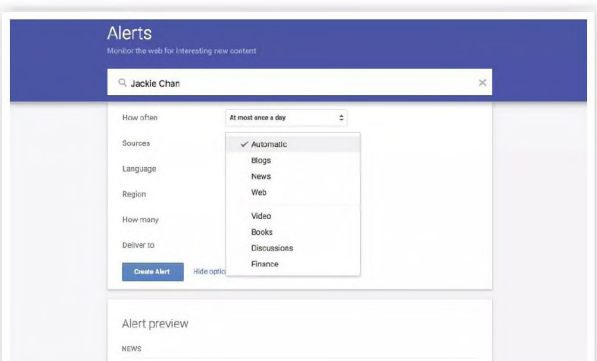
Step 1

To get started setting up an alert, navigate to www.google.co.uk/alerts. Enter your query just as if you were doing a normal Google search. You can use the various Google search options, including quotes, minus sign, to exclude words and the site prefix to find specific types of website.



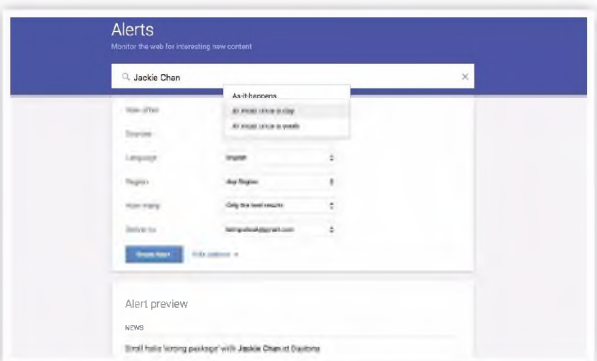
Step 2

Using the Show options menu, you can choose to tell Google to only provide content of a specific type (videos, for example) or you can request that every type of result is sent to you. Everything alerts include results from Google Web Search, Google Blog Search and Google News.



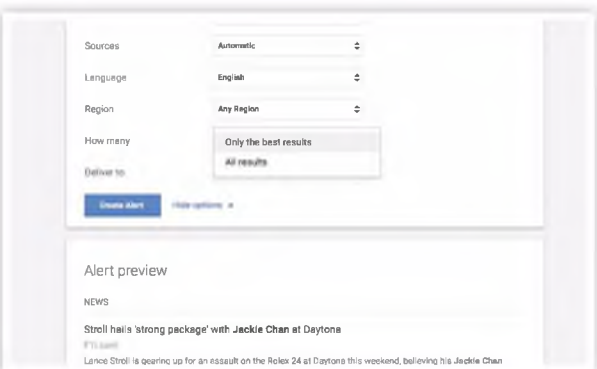
Step 3

The next step is to choose a delivery rate. The default is once a day: Google Alerts checks for new results once per day and emails you if it finds new results. Depending on the subject, Google may not be able to deliver alerts daily. Alerts on these subjects will be sent, when they are available for you.



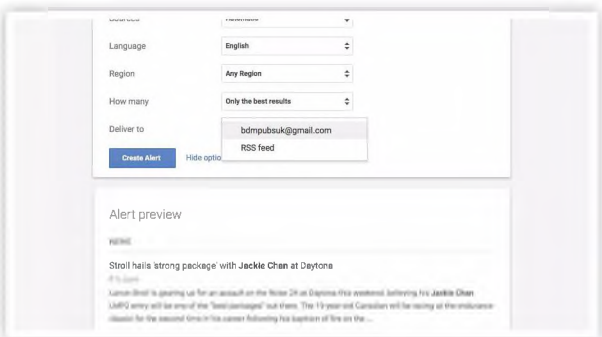
Step 4

To help you avoid an alert email full of low quality results, you can change the volume of the alerts to "Only the best results". This allows Google to filter results to those most relevant to your query and those of high quality. If you prefer, you can change this setting to "All results".



Step 5

Enter the email address to which you want your alerts delivered. Google will protect your email address and will not use it to spam you with offers for any other product or service. If you aren't signed in to a Google Account when you create an alert, Google will send you a verification email.

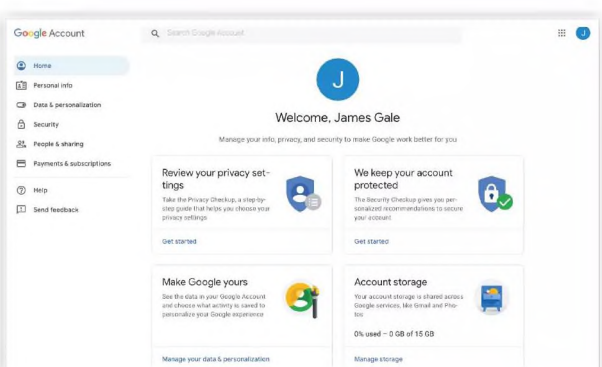


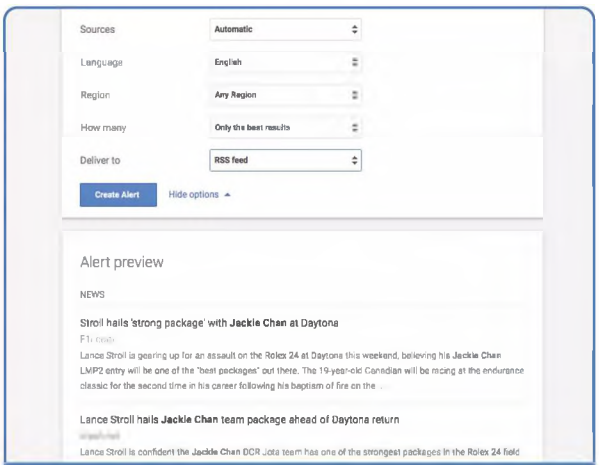
Step 6

If you prefer, and if you are signed in to a Google account when creating the alert, you can choose to have the results sent via an RSS feed. Simply sign in and choose the Feed option in the Deliver to field. You can read yours in any RSS feed reader.

Step 7

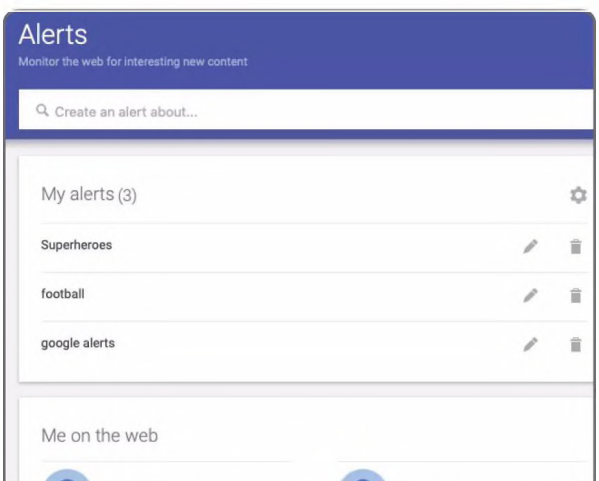
To view any of these Google Alerts, you have to open your email application and check the email addresses that you linked to your Google Account during initial set up. You can check this information at anytime via your account link, top right of your browser.





Manage Google Alerts

Users with Google Accounts can view, create, edit and delete their alerts using the Manage your Alerts page. Click on the Edit button and you will be able to alter any of the original settings using the simple drop-down menus. You can manage alerts for more than one email address by adding your other email address to your existing Google Account. To add an email address to your Google Account, visit your Google account page and use the Email addresses section.



Delete Google Alerts

Should you find the info you are looking for or simply tire of the subject matter of your alerts, you can delete your alerts subjects, one by one. To do this open the main Google Alerts pages via this link: www.google.com/alerts.

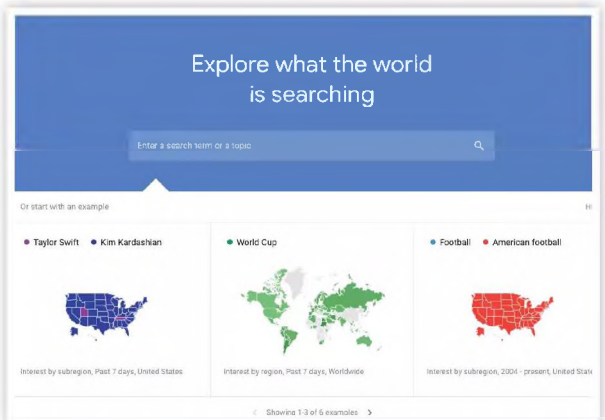
At the top of the page notice your alert subjects. You can edit these by tapping the pencil icon or delete them by tapping the Bin icon. Please note you are not given any confirmation window, the alerts are deleted instantly.

How to Personalise Google Trends

The Google Trends app brings you the world's most popular search terms or topics. Breaking down the results by country and region, while also offering insights and keeping you updated to the latest trends. Users can also browse history data giving you a clearer view of the world's online habits.

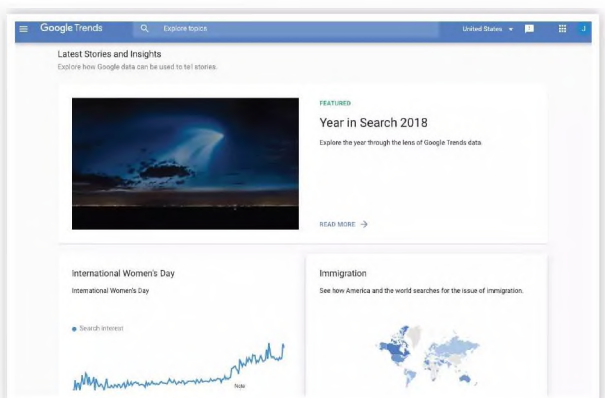
Step 1

Navigate to the Google trends website trends.google.com to be presented with this home page. This is a far complex application so be advised to take a few moments to get used to the layout and the control options you will find here.



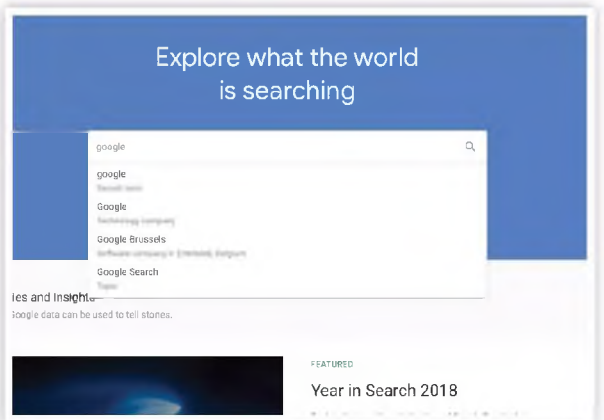
Step 2

Scrolling down through the home page you will find the various options including latest stories, insights and updates, historical data and recently trending search results. We will look at all of these but to start let's focus on the main search bar.



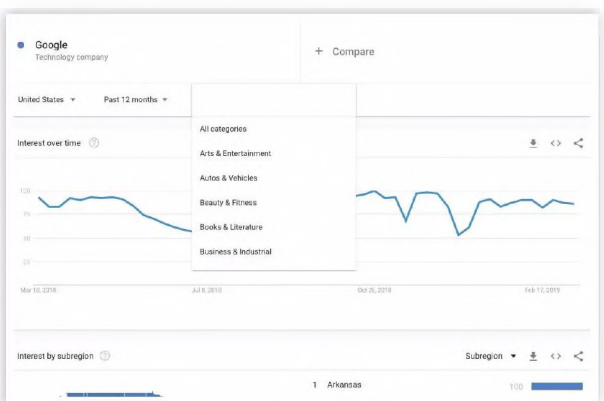
Step 3

In the search bar, enter your term and click on the magnifying glass to activate your search. Some will bring a variety of different searches or similar terms, if this is the case a drop down menu will appear enabling you to select specifically for you.



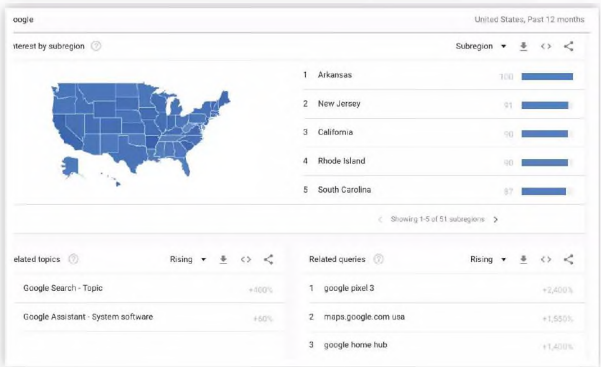
Step 4

Your search will show your results as follows; location, time period, search type and category. You can adjust each of these as you wish to further focus your results. You may wish to check Shopping when looking for most popular selling item etc.



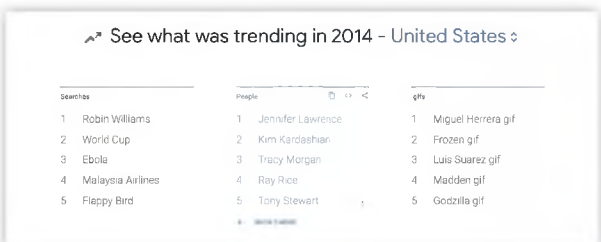
Step 5

Your results will also be broken down by sub region for your area of search. With the most popular area listed first and so on. Notice that related searches and queries are also listed here. You can share each of these search results by clicking the share icon.



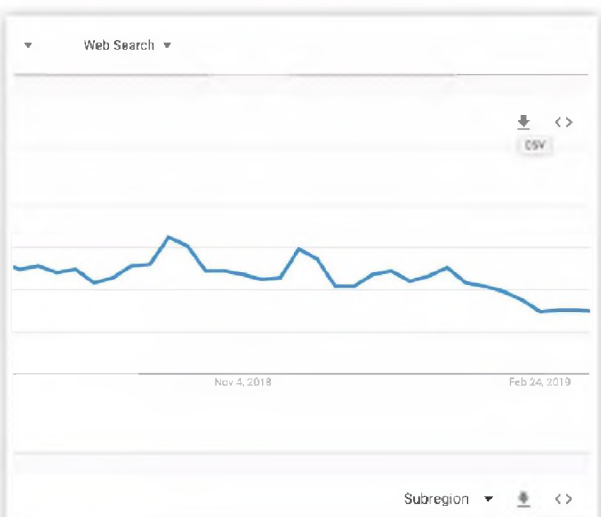
Step 6

If you are looking for an online time machine, Google have one. On the home screen, scroll down and select the year you wish visit and you will be given the most popular search terms from that time period, spread across numerous categories.



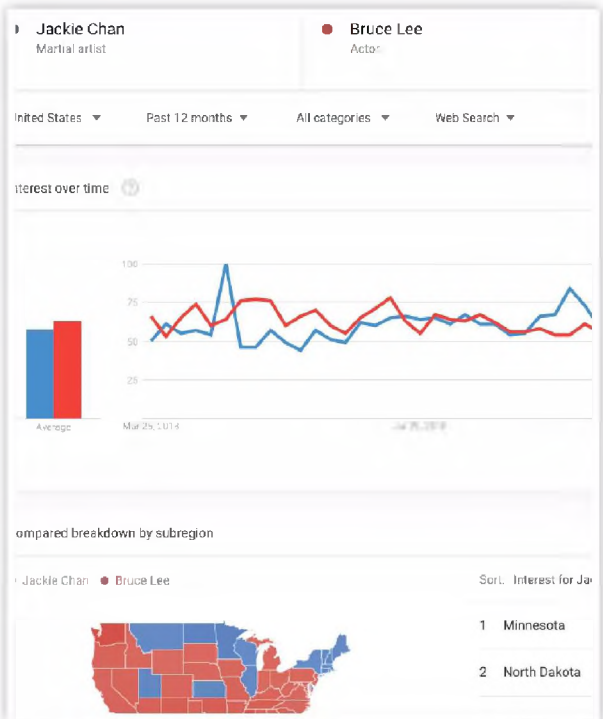
Step 7

All the information found via this app can exported from the web browser to a large variety of spreadsheet software, including Microsoft Excel and Apple's Pages. To save your information as a csv doc click the download icon.



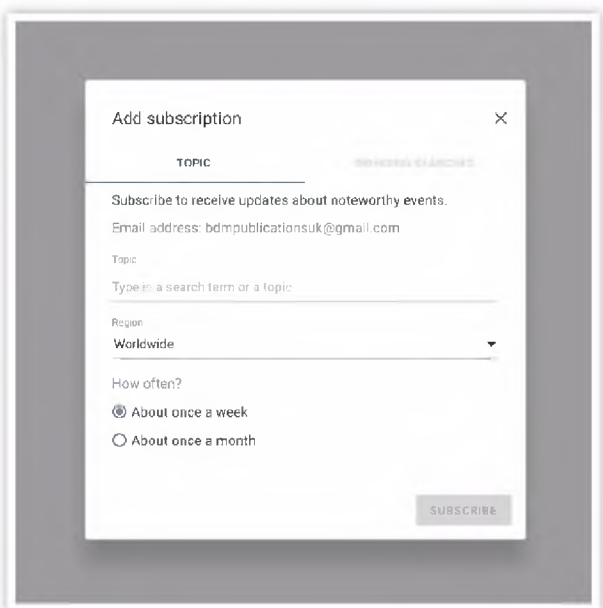
Step 8

One of the best features of this app is the ability to compare two topics and how the results match up with one another. You can add various terms to compare and once again these results can be downloaded as a csv doc or shared via the linked icons.



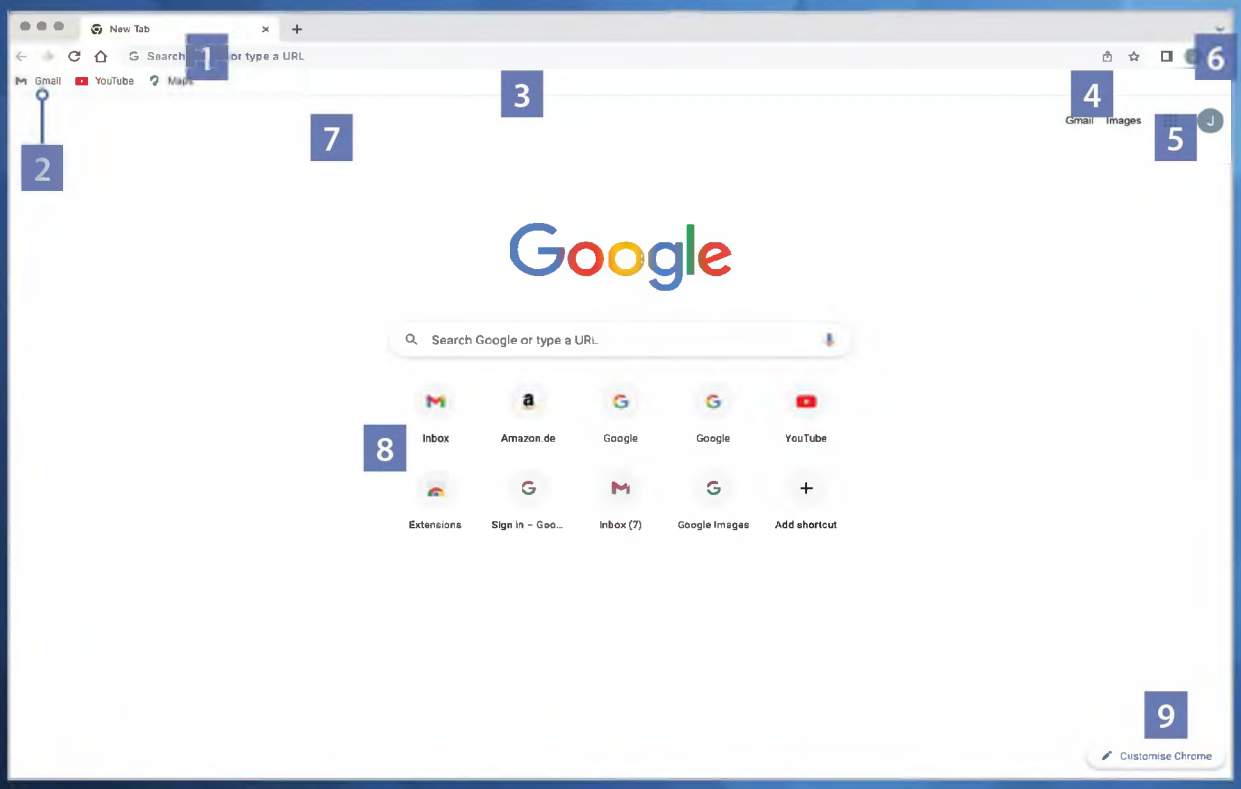
Step 9

You can also subscribe to a regular (weekly or monthly) email which will send you updated data based your key search terms, to sign up click the + icon bottom left and enter the terms you wish to follow. Now simply wait for your email update to arrive.



Getting Started with Chrome

Google Chrome is much more than an alternative web browser. If you are looking to use the Google app suite to any degree we strongly advise you to download Chrome now!



1 Tabs

Just like almost all other browsers, Chrome lets you open multiple web pages at once and display them in tabs. Simply click on any tab to display the page. To add a new tab, click on the small tab to the right of the last one. To remove a tab, click the small X on the right of the tab you want to close. You can also manage tabs from the Chrome options menu.

2 Navigation Controls

From left to right, the main buttons you use when navigating web pages using Chrome are: Back, Forward, Refresh and Home. Click and hold on both the Back and Forward buttons to see your recent navigation history. The Home button may not be displayed here on a brand new install of Chrome but you can turn it on in the settings (Appearance > Show Home Button).

3 Omni Box/Address Box

This is where the URL of the current website is shown. You can use the Omni box to either type a full URL or type a search term. Type a URL and press Return and that web page will open. If you type a search term, Google search results will be shown instead. You can change the default search engine that is used in Settings > Search.

4 Bookmark Button

Clicking on the star while viewing any web page will open a small bookmark option window. This allows you to choose a name for the bookmark, as well as selecting where to save it. If the star is golden, that means you have already bookmarked the page you are viewing. By using the Bookmark Button you will be able to compile a listing of all your favourite websites in a single place.

5 Extensions

Many different pieces of software will add extensions to the browser, allowing you to perform specific tasks while viewing websites. The extension shown here is the AVG toolbar, installed as part of the AVG antivirus software. You can disable or remove Chrome browser extensions simply by right-clicking on the icon and choosing from the Action menu.

6 Chrome Options

This is where you will find all of the controls and settings for Chrome, from basic display settings to advanced developer tools. You can also manage your bookmarks, extensions and search history from here. We will look at the Chrome Options in more detail later.

7 Bookmarks Bar

This bar is turned off by default, so must be activated in the Settings if you want to use it. When saving bookmarks, you have the option to Save to Bookmarks Bar. Any pages saved to this will be shown as quick links in the bar. This is very useful for saving those websites you use most often. Depending on the length of the title you give the bookmarks, only about five or six links will be visible here; the remainder are displayed in a drop-down menu.

8 Shortcuts

This section of the Google Chrome homescreen contains a fully customisable Shortcut links to your favourite websites and web apps. To add new shortcuts click on the link, bottom right. Then add the links name and the full url.

9 Customise Chrome

If you have grown tired of the simple and clean look of the Chrome browser, click here. You can edit the background image, change your shortcut links to your most visited websites links and finally change the colour and theme for the entire browser window, including the controls and search bar.

Chrome System Requirements

Chrome is fairly lightweight, so it should run happily even on an old computer. Here are the bare minimum requirements for PC, Mac, Smartphone & Tablet users.

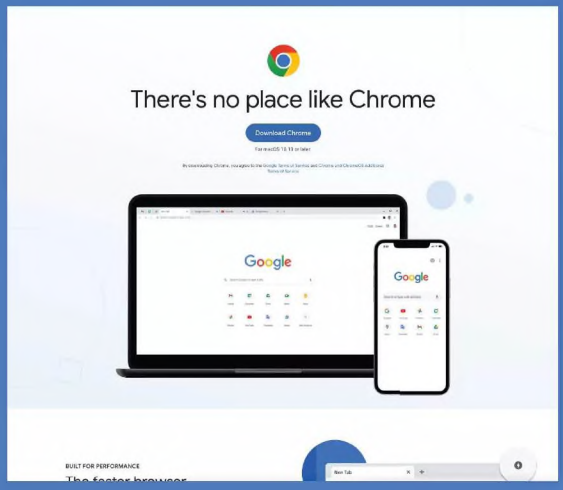
Operating System: Windows 10 or later, macOS High Sierra 10.13 or later, 64-bit Ubuntu 18.04+, Debian 10+, or Fedora Linux 32+, Android 7.0 Nougat, iOS 14 or later.
Free Disk Space: 153MB

Installing Chrome

You may find that Chrome is preinstalled on many new computers but if not, here is how to install it yourself.

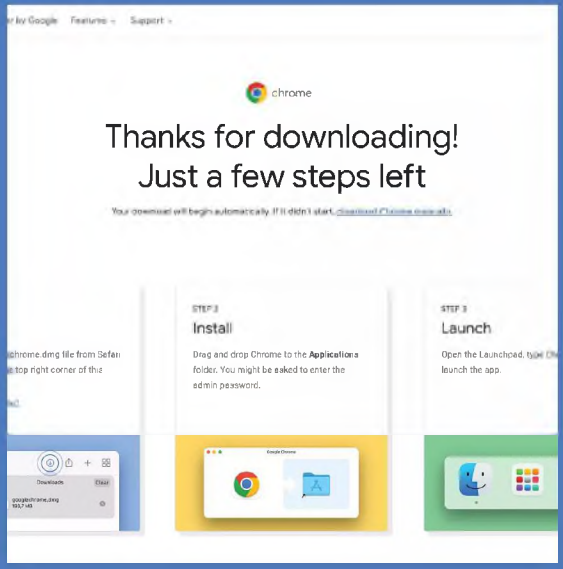
Step 1

Visit www.google.co.uk/chrome/browser/desktop/index.html and click on the Download Now button to get the Chrome installer. You can choose to make Chrome your default browser at this point or you can change that setting later.



Step 2

Once the download is complete, Chrome will install automatically. When the installation is complete, a Chrome browser window will open, giving you the opportunity to take a tour of Chrome's main features; and that's it, simple eh?



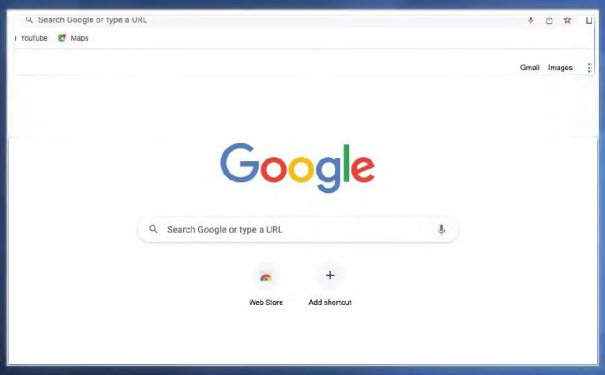
Customising the Chrome Browser

There are many different ways you can customise your Chrome experience, from adding extensions to setting the default home page. If you really want to make Chrome personal to you, there is no better way than adding a theme.

Changing the Theme

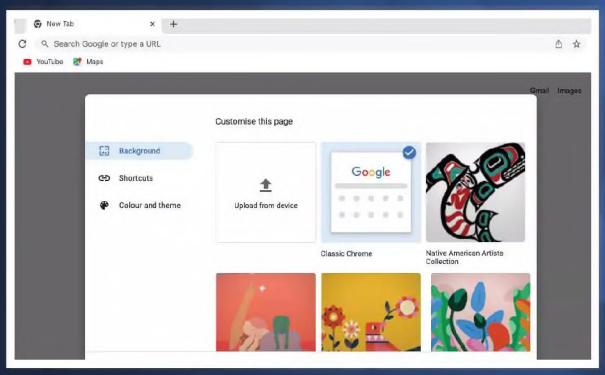
Step 1

Open Chrome on your computer and click on the Chrome Menu button in the bottom right corner. Look for the Chrome options link, click this and select Settings and this window will open.



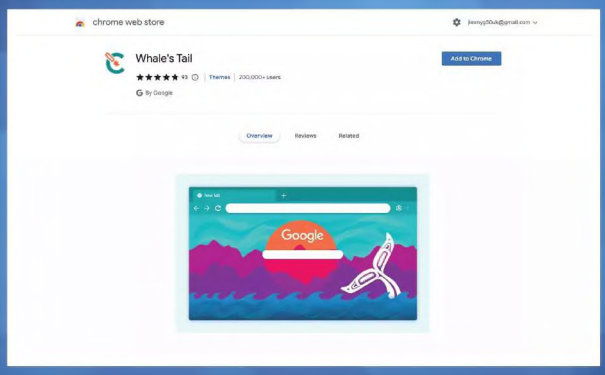
Step 2

From this link you will open the basic customisation options of Chrome. From this pop up you can change the Chrome Browsers' Background image, Chrome's web Shortcuts and the Colour and theme. Click on each option and make your choice, we advise to set your Shortcuts to your Most-visited sites, for ease of use.



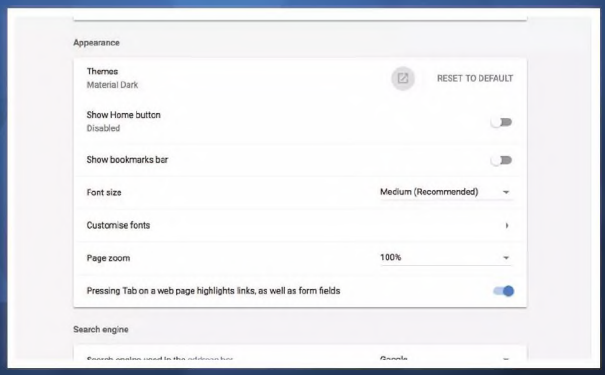
Step 3

For more indepth customisation options, retrun to the Chrome browser home page and select the Chrome Web Store link, which shows web apps and extensions. To view the available themes, scroll down to the left-hand menu and click the Themes link. A selection of themes will now be displayed on screen. Click on your choice to download it.



Step 4

You download aren't saved on your computer, so applying a new theme will overwrite the previous one. You can remove a custom theme at any time by clicking the Chrome options button, then selecting Settings. Under the Appearance heading you will see the option to Reset to Default Theme.

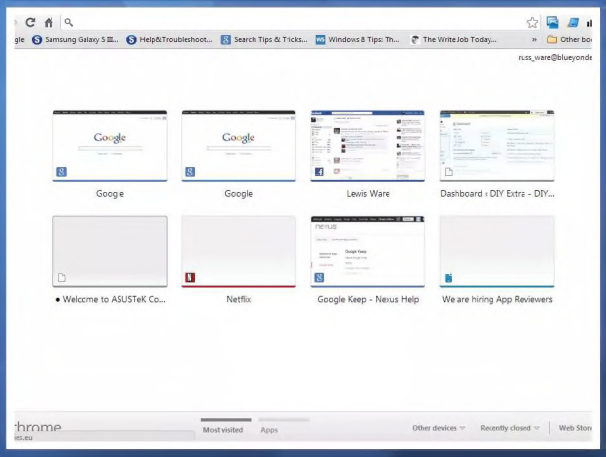


Change the Default Home Page

Chrome gives you several choices for what you see when you start it up. You may decide that you want to always open with the Google home page or you may want to show a selection of your most visited sites. All of these options are accessed through Options > Settings > On Startup.

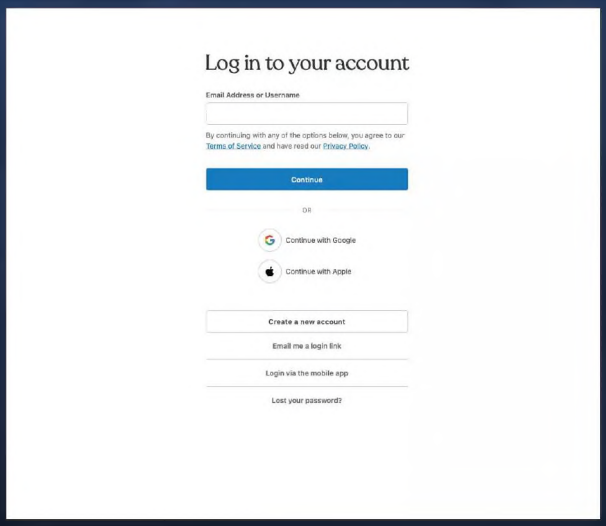
Open the New Tab Page

This option will display a grid of eight website thumbnails. Each thumbnail relates to one of your eight most visited web pages. Click on any of the thumbnails to go to the page. You can remove any of the thumbnails by hovering the mouse pointer over it and then clicking the X that appears in the top right corner.



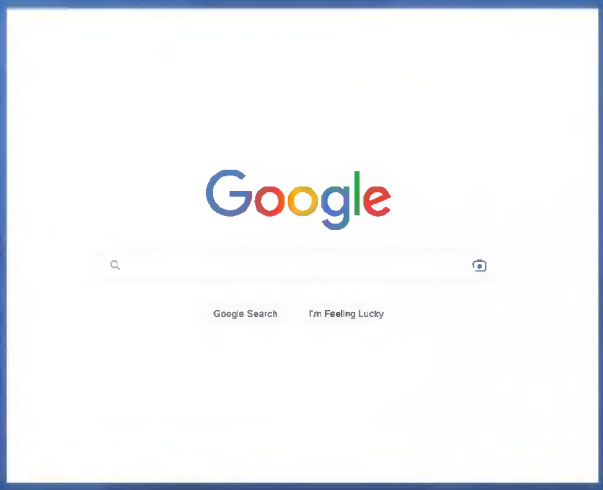
Continue Where I Left Off

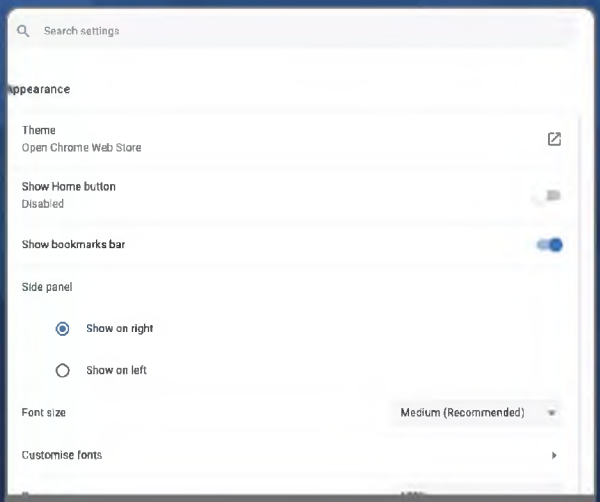
If this option is enabled, Chrome will always start up showing the website and tabs you were viewing when you last closed the browser. If you close all of the open tabs individually, rather than clicking the X at the top right to close the entire browser window, when you open Chrome again it will display the New Tab page.



Open a Specific Page or Set of Pages

You can use this option to set a single web page to open whenever you start Chrome. This could be the Google home page for your country, the Facebook login or any other web page you choose. You can also choose a set of pages to open. Click Set Pages and enter the URLs of the sites you want to open. They will each open in a separate tab when you start Chrome.





Show the Home Button

When you first install and use Chrome, you will probably notice that there is no Home button in the toolbar. We don't really understand why Google chose to hide the Home button but you can activate it easily, so it's not too much of a problem. To activate the Home button, click the Options button and select Settings. Under the Appearance heading, check the box next to Show Home Button. You can choose which page is displayed when the Home button is clicked (the New Tabs page or another of your choice).

How to Save and Sync Chrome

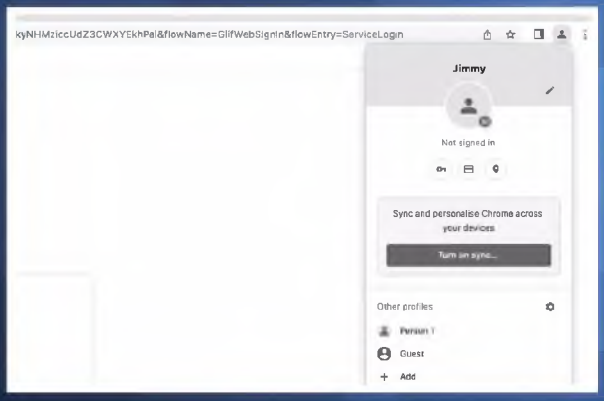
If you use Google Chrome on any device other than just your computer, the ability to sync the browser is a great feature. Chrome lets you save bookmarks, preferences, themes and even extensions and then share those changes with all your mobile devices quickly and easily.

Signing in to Chrome

Before you can sync your Chrome settings, you will need to sign in using a common Google account.

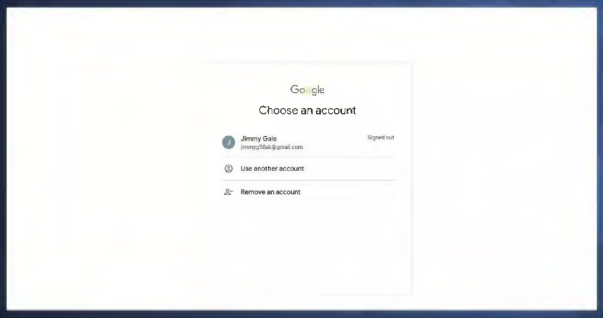
Step 1

› Open Chrome on your computer and click on the Chrome User button in the top right corner. Now follow the on-screen instructions and sign into your account. Click this and a new window will open.



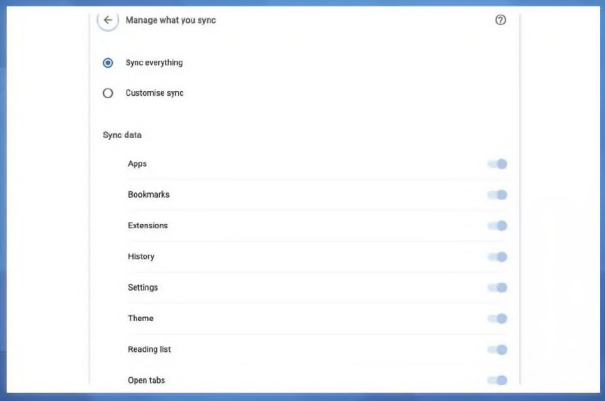
Step 2

› You will now need to sign in using the Google account that you use on your other devices (smartphones, tablets, etc.). You probably only have one account but if you have more than one, make sure you check this.



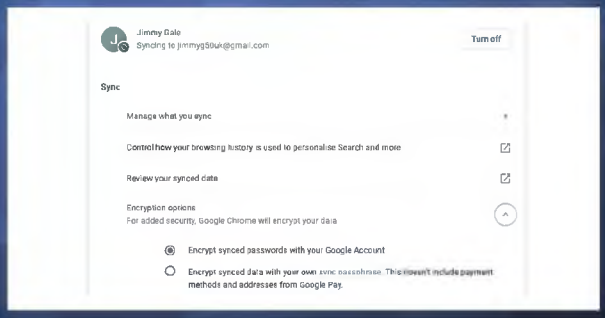
Step 3

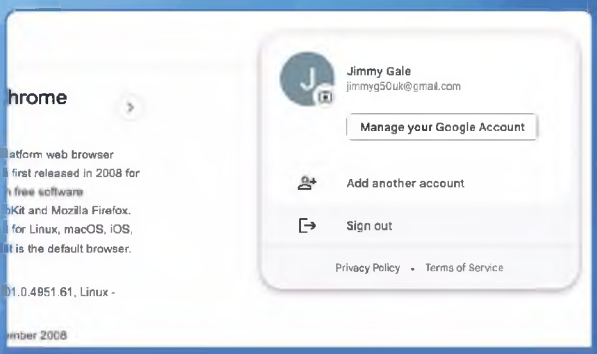
› A Sync Settings windows should now open but if not, go to Chrome Menu > Settings > You & Google > Sync and Google Serives. Here you can select what is synced between devices. Click on Manage What You Sync and choose what to share.



Step 4

› You can also choose to encrypt your synced data. By default, your Google Account password is used to encrypt saved passwords. If you want, change this to encrypt all your synced data and then create a custom passphrase for encryption.





Signing Out of Chrome

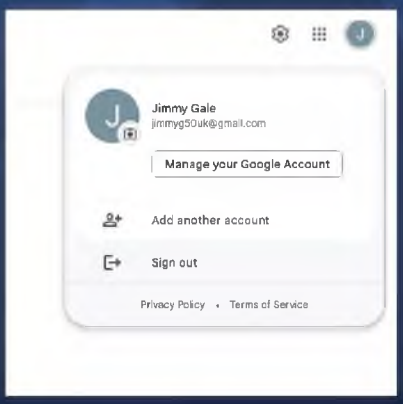
You can disconnect your Google account from Chrome and stop syncing with your other devices at any time. Disconnecting your Google account won't wipe the data stored on your computer or in your Google account. However, any future changes you make on your computer will not be reflected on other computers or devices that you have signed in to Chrome on.

Syncing Open Tabs

You can disconnect your Google account from Chrome and stop syncing with your other devices at any time. Disconnecting your Google account won't wipe the data stored on your computer or in your Google account. However, any future changes you make on your computer will not be reflected on other computers or devices that you have signed in to Chrome on.

Step 1

Before you can sync open tabs between devices, you will need to make sure that the setting is enabled on both devices. Sign in to Chrome using the same Google account on the devices you want to sync.

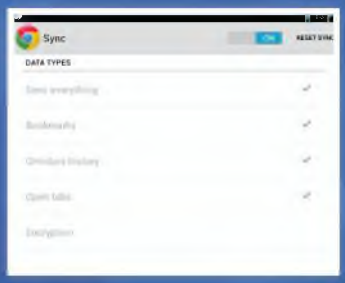


Step 2

Check your sync settings on each device. Open the Chrome Menu > Settings, click the icon to the right of the Sync opinion and then check Open Tabs.

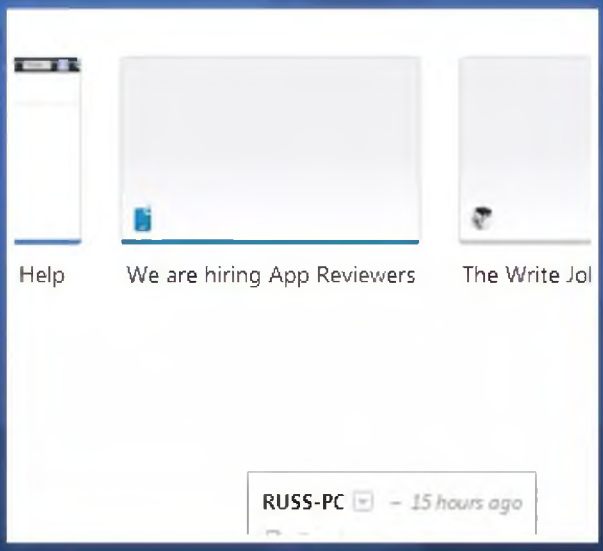
Step 3

On Chrome for Android, tap the Menu button > Settings > Sign in to Chrome. Once signed in, tap Sync and make sure the Open tabs checkbox is selected. You should now be ready to go.



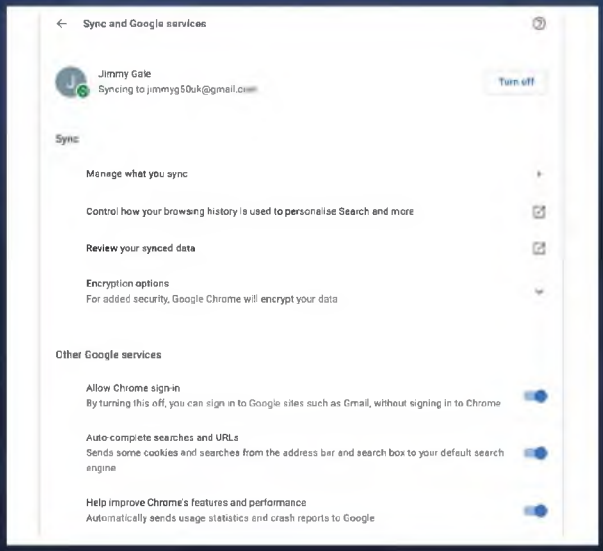
Step 4

Open a new tab on your computer by clicking the New Tab button or Ctrl+T. In the lower right corner of the screen, click Other devices and click the tab you want to open on the current device.



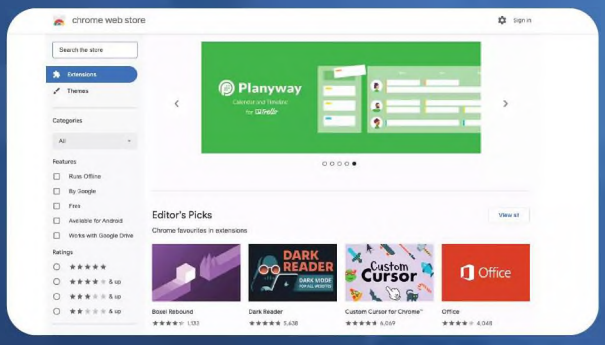
Step 5

Open tabs are grouped together by devices. You can hide a specific one by disabling tab syncing on that particular device. To temporarily hide a device, right-click its name and select Hide.



Using the Chrome Web Store

The Chrome Web Store gives you the option of adding thousands of different themes and extensions to your browser. Here's how to get started with apps and extensions on Chrome.

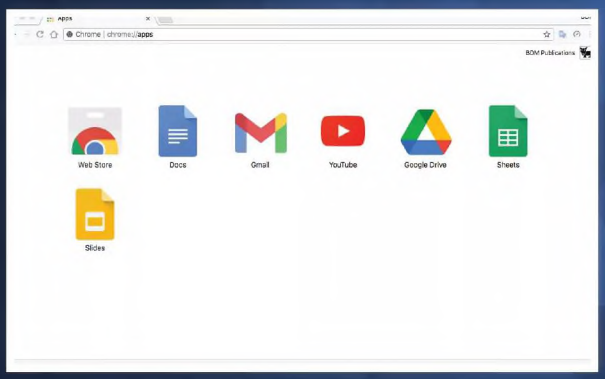


Chrome Themes

Chrome Extensions are web-based programmes that are designed to be used entirely within the browser. Using apps, you can do things like create documents, edit photos and listen to music, without having to install complicated third-party software on your computer. Themes on the other hand are purely aesthetic as they change the look of the Chrome browser and do not add any further functionality. Think of Themes as a way of injecting a little extra bit of your personality into your web browser.

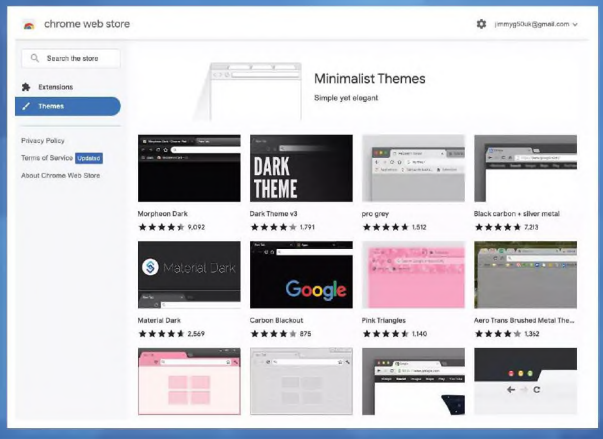
Step 1

You can access the Web Store easily by clicking on the Apps Icon in the top left area of the page when you start Chrome. The Apps page will slide into view, displaying any apps you currently have installed (Gmail and YouTube for example).



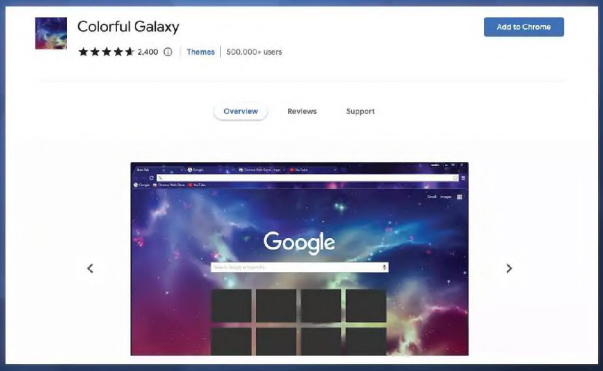
Step 2

Click on the lower right side of the Chrome Web Store icon to open it. The web store home screen shows a selection of popular and trending themes. Roll over any of the images to read a short description. To see more details, click anywhere on the description or theme title.



Step 3

To install a theme, click on the Add to Chrome button. Your new theme will instantly install and be present within your current Chrome Browser window. You can also share themes with others by clicking on the Share button next to the Add to Chrome button; or Launch Theme button if already installed. Choose the Share method from the list.

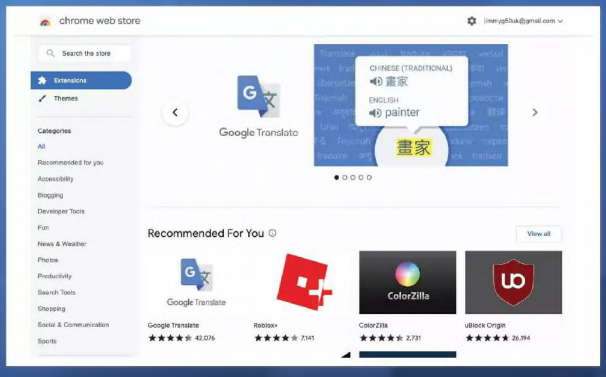


Chrome Extensions

Extensions are extra features and tools that you can add to Google Chrome. Using extensions, you can customise Chrome with the features you want or need, while keeping your browser free of things that you don't. Some extensions add buttons next to the address bar to let you know about certain events. For instance, you can use the Google Mail Checker to get alerts about new emails. Some extensions act like shortcuts. For example, if you use a feed reader, the RSS Subscription Extension lets you know if there's a feed for the site you're on. Click the small icon that appears in the address bar to quickly subscribe to the feed. Here's how to find and install extensions to Google Chrome.

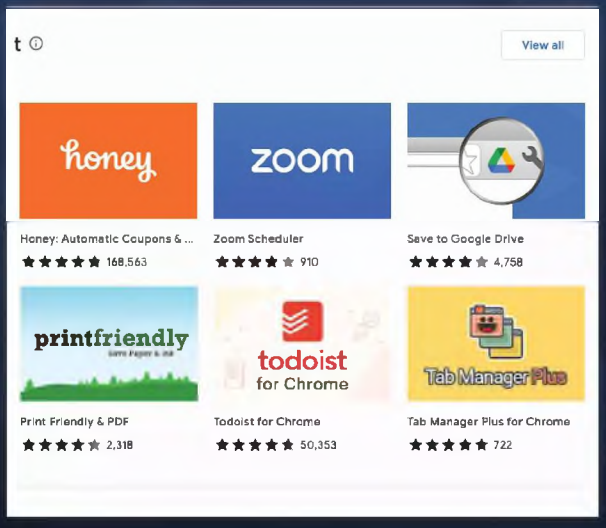
Step 1

You need to return to the Web Store, following the same process as previously covered. Once again the Apps page will be the first thing you view, displaying any apps you currently have installed. Unlike apps, extensions will not be displayed here.



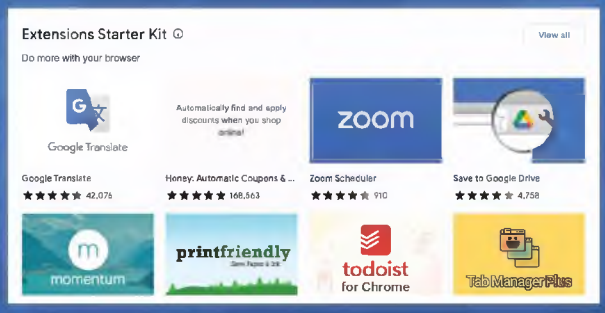
Step 2

Click on the Chrome Web Store icon to open it. The web store Home screen shows a selection of popular and trending extensions and themes. To view available extensions, click the Extensions link at top left. An extended menu will then allow you to choose a category.



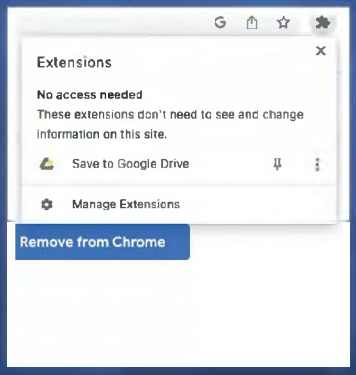
Step 3

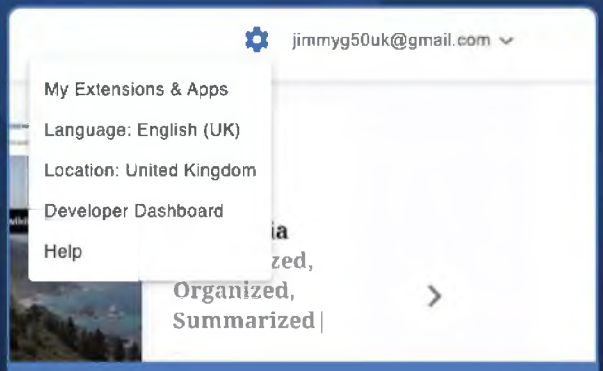
Roll over any of the extension images to read a short description. To see more details, click anywhere on the description or extension title. You can then read an overview, details, reviews and see related software. To install an extension, click on the Add to Chrome button.



Step 4

When you have confirmed you wish to save it, your new extension will be downloaded and appears as a small icon at the top right of the screen. To open this simply click on the icon.





Manage the Toolbar

You can rearrange and customise how the extensions are displayed in the toolbar. To rearrange the icons, simply drag extension icons next to the address bar to rearrange them on the browser toolbar. If you want to see more extension icons on the browser toolbar, you can expand the extension icon area. Click the right border of the address bar and drag it to the left. Similarly, to hide extra extensions, extend the address bar by dragging its right border to the right. You can click the arrow button next to the Chrome menu to see your extra extensions (if they display icons).

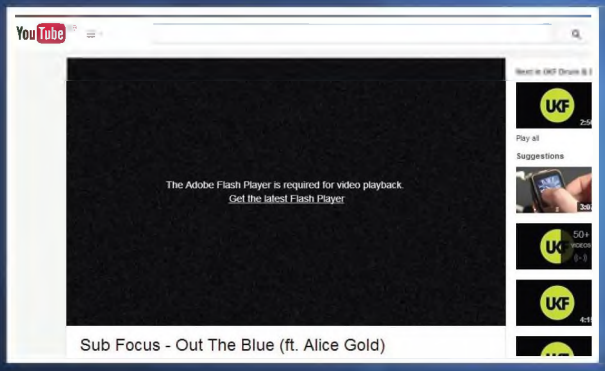
How to Use Chrome Plug-ins

Plug-ins are essential pieces of software that help the browser to read and display certain types of content. Unlike extensions, which add extra features to Chrome, plug-ins are essential to the smooth running of the browser. Here's how to check, install, block and disable plug-ins for Chrome.

Installing Plug-ins

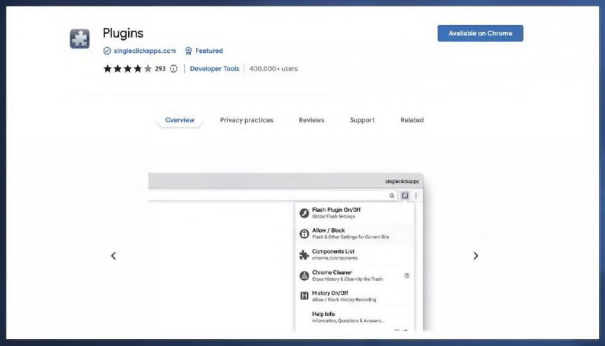
Step 1

❱ Assuming that you allow websites to use plug-ins, if Google Chrome detects that you're missing a particular plug-in for a page you are trying to view, you will see a prompt to install the plug-in at the top of the web page.



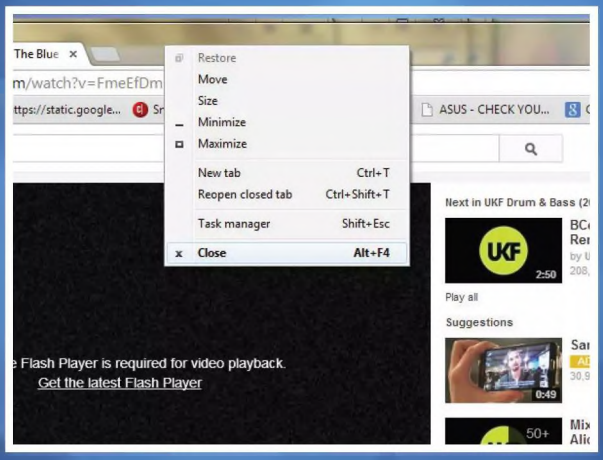
Step 2

❱ Click Install plug-in in the message dialog. Some plug-ins begin the installation process by downloading a setup file to your computer. For those plug-ins, make sure that you confirm the download by clicking Save in the downloads bar that appears.



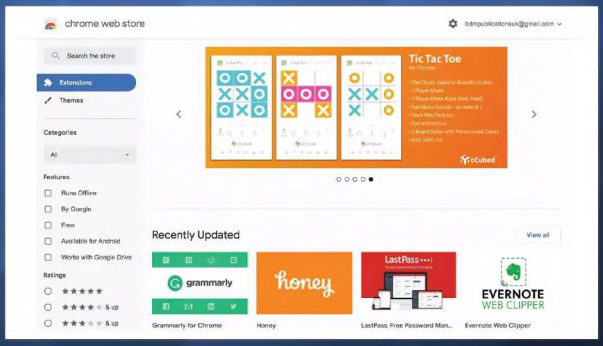
Step 3

❱ Once the download has finished, restart Google Chrome by closing all open windows to complete the installation process. This is an important step as Chrome needs to be restarted or it will continue to look for the plug-in you just downloaded.



Step 4

❱ NOTE: It is not unusual that a previously installed Chrome Plug-in will require an update to enable functionality. These updates will require you to manually agree to re-install the plug-in, by downloading the new version, via the same process detailed above.



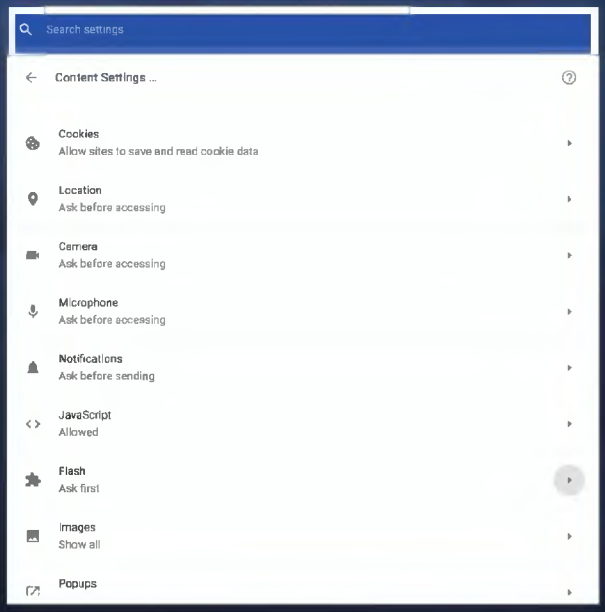
Blocking Chrome's Plug-ins

Step 1

Plug-ins are allowed by default. However, since they can occasionally be a security risk, Google Chrome blocks plug-ins that are outdated or not widely used. Examples include Java, RealPlayer, QuickTime and Shockwave. You can also block all plug-ins on a one by one basis.

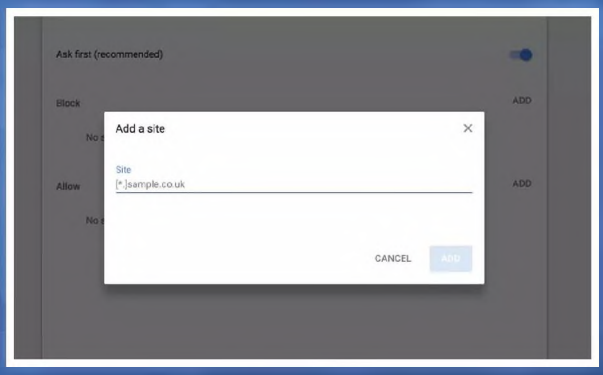
Step 2

To block plug-ins, click the Chrome menu and select Settings. Click Show advanced settings and in the Privacy section click the Content settings button. Click the arrow to the right of the plug-in and select which sites you wish to block from its use.



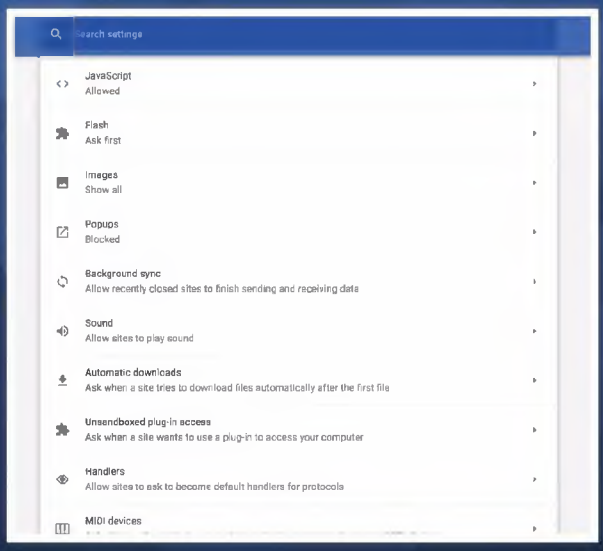
Step 3

To block the website(s) that are causing you an issue with the a specific plug, such as Flash Player for example, click the Add button and enter the URL of the site that has issues and then Click Add again to complete the process.



Step 4

If you have used previous versions of the Chrome browser you may notice that you are unable to completely disable a plug-in in the current Chrome build. You are able to block plug-ins as detailed here and there is no limit on the number of sites you can add to the blocked list.



Chrome Plug-ins

Whether using Windows, Linux or Mac, Chrome supports many of the most popular and widely used plug-ins.

These include:

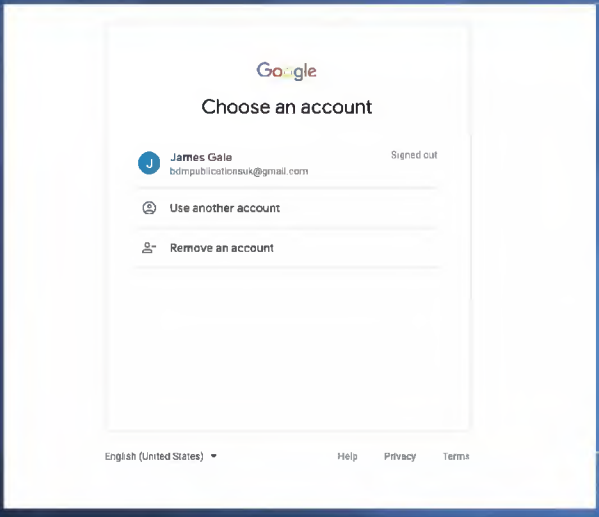
- Honey
- Java
- Real PlayerQuickTime
- Microsoft Silverlight
- Adobe Reader
- Windows Media Player
- QuickTime

Setting Up Chrome Autofill

Some of the most useful features of Chrome, like Chrome Autofill, are easy to set up and can make browsing the Internet a much quicker experience, particularly if you find yourself forever filling out online forms.

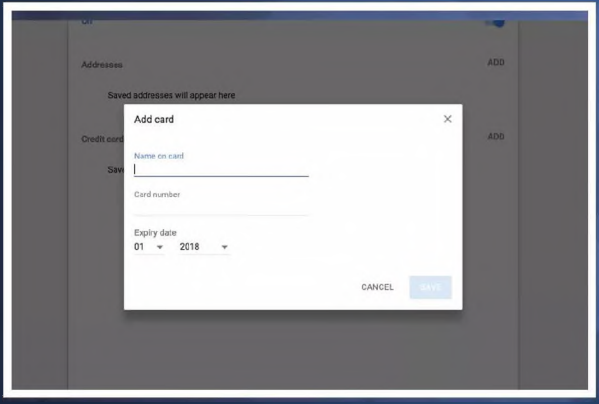
Step 1

The first time you fill out a form, Google Chrome automatically saves the contact information that you enter, like your name, address, phone number or email address, as an Autofill entry. You can store multiple addresses as separate entries.



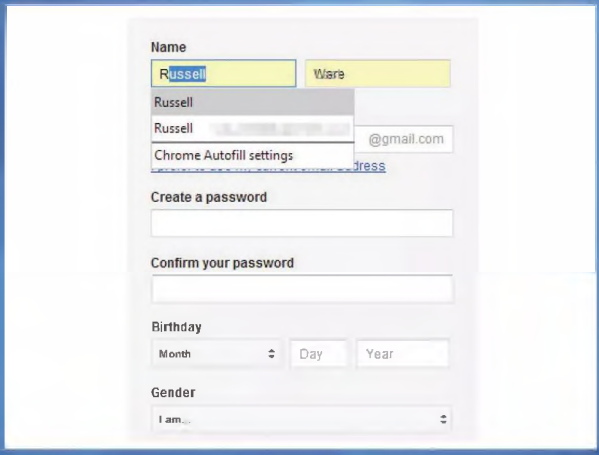
Step 2

Chrome can also save your credit card information, with your permission. When you do this on a form, Chrome asks you at the top of the page whether you'd like to save the information.



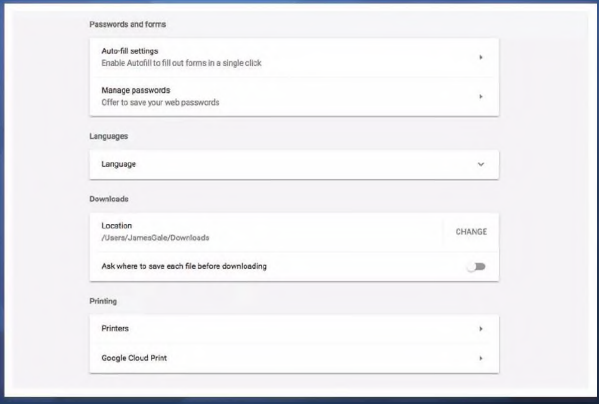
Step 3

If your Chrome Autofill information is correct, you don't need to do anything more. If you have changed address recently, or some of the other information has changed, it can be frustrating for Chrome to keep suggesting the wrong info.



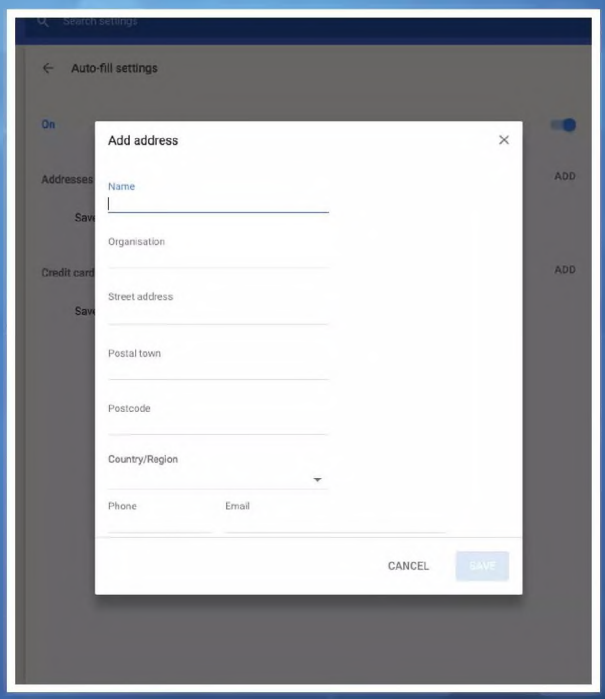
Step 4

To manage your Autofill entries, open Chrome and click on the menu button in the top right corner (icon with the three dots in a column). Select Settings and then click Advanced at the bottom of the page. Find the Passwords and forms section and click Autofill settings.



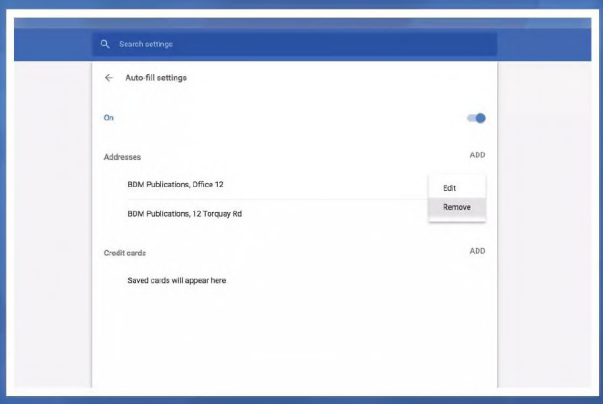
Step 5

If you have more than one Autofill entry, click the one you want to edit and then click the Edit button that appears to the right of it. Complete or edit the information form and then click OK to finish. You can also Add a completely new address using the button here.



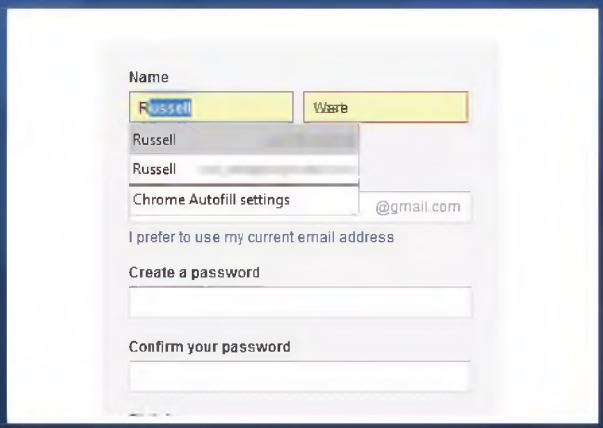
Step 6

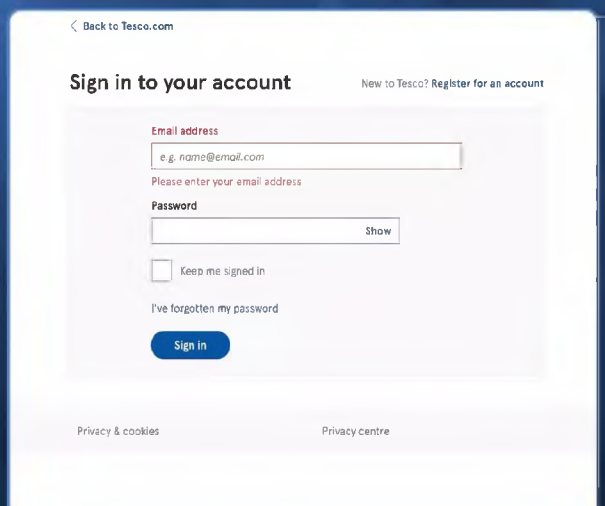
To remove an entry, click on it in the Autofill settings and then click the X that appears to the right of the entry. If you want to disable Chrome Autofill altogether, you can do so by unchecking the box next to the option in the Chrome settings.



Step 7

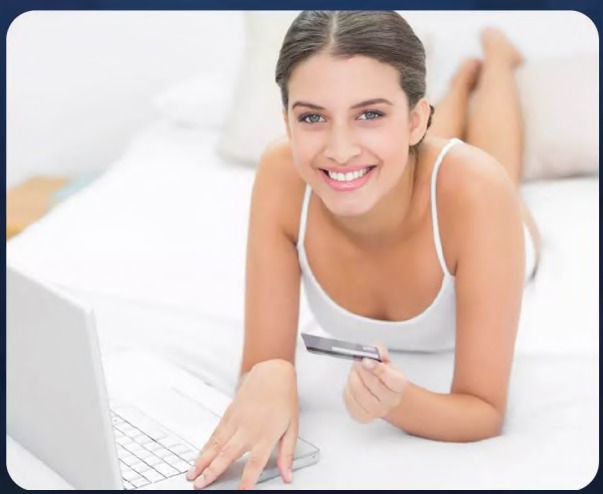
Now, when you start filling out a form, the Autofill entries that match what you're typing appear in a menu. Select an entry to automatically complete the form with information from it. This allows you to have multiple entries in Autofill.





Trusted Sites

It's important that you use Autofill only on websites you trust, as certain websites might try to capture your information in hidden or hard to see fields. Some websites prevent browsers from saving text that you've entered, so Google Chrome won't be able to complete forms on those sites.



Chrome Tips and Tricks

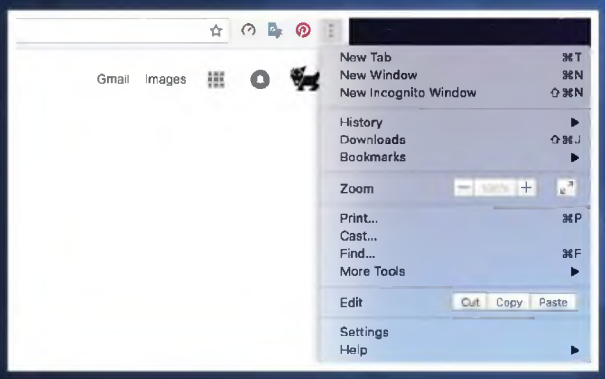
Even if you have been using Chrome for a while, there are probably dozens of tricks that you never even knew were possible. Here are a few tips and tricks to get you started.

Chrome-Casting Your Screen

Have you ever been browsing online and stumbled upon a video, or photograph, that you want to share with those around you on the big screen of your family TV? With the additional purchase of a Google Chromecast you will be able to do just that, by casting content from your Chrome browser, on your desktop or mobile devices, to your TV. The quickest way to do this, on your desktop device, is by right-clicking on the Chrome window and then clicking on "Cast". On a mobile, tap the Three dot icon, top right of the Chrome app, and tap "Cast".

Incognito Window

There are several ways to open a new incognito window for Chrome. If you have a Chrome shortcut pinned to the task bar, you can right-click it and select New Incognito Window. You can also click the Settings menu button at the top right of the browser window and select the same. The quickest way to do it however, is to use the keyboard shortcut Ctrl + Shift + N. Content displayed in an incognito window will not show up in your browser history, nor will cookies be saved.



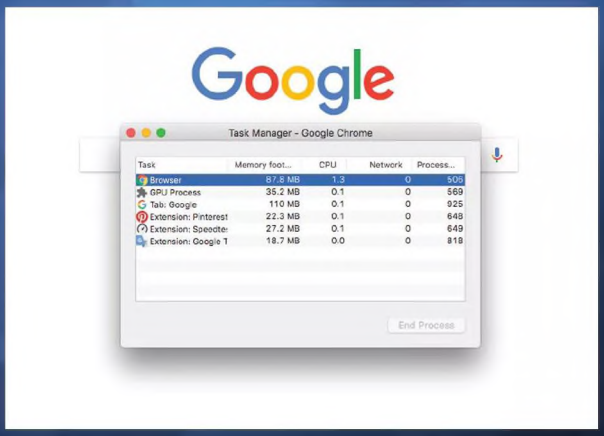
Chrome Keyboard Shortcuts

There are several useful keyboard shortcuts for Chrome. Remember that the browser window must be currently selected for these to work.

Ctrl+Shift+N	New Incognito Window
Alt+Home	Load your Home Page
Ctrl+T	Open a new tab
Ctrl+Shift+T	Open most recently closed tab
Ctrl+Tab	Scroll through open tabs
Ctrl+J	Opens your downloads screen

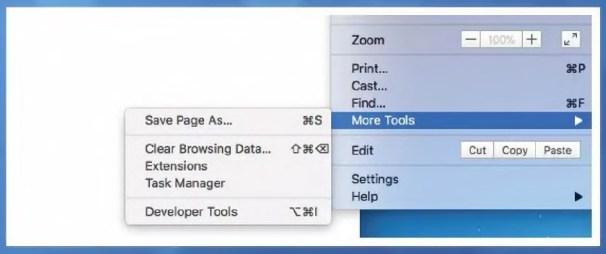
Chrome Task Manager

The Task Manager is a useful tool to see how much memory your currently open tabs and browser plug-ins are using. To open the task manager, right-click the top of the browser window and select Task Manager from the menu. Highlight one and click End Process to stop it running. You can also press Shift + Esc as a quicker way to bring up the Google Chrome Task Manager.



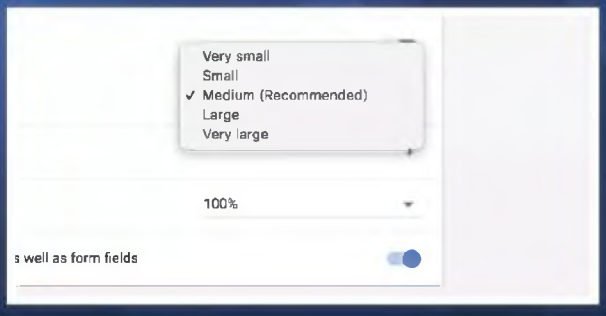
Spring Cleaning

To delete cookies, click on the menu button and go to Settings. Scroll down to the Privacy section, and click Content Settings. Now you can click Remove All or Remove Individual Cookies. To clear more data such as the Google Chrome browsing history and cache, click the Tools icon and select Clear Browsing Data. To clear the most visited websites that appear on your Google Chrome Start page, you must clear your browsing history using the method already described. Clearing your Google Chrome browser history will also stop matches from previously browsed sites appearing as suggestions in your address bar.



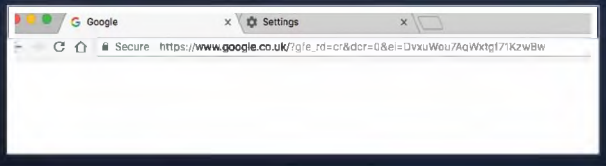
Adjust Text Size

Having trouble reading small text on a page in Chrome? No problem! Chrome lets you easily zoom both in and out, increasing or decreasing the size of both text and images. You can do this a couple of ways. The first is to click the Settings menu button and use the Zoom controls you find there. An easier way to do it is to hold Ctrl and use the scroll wheel on your mouse to zoom in and out; as you do this, a small window will pop out of the address bar to show you the level of zoom.



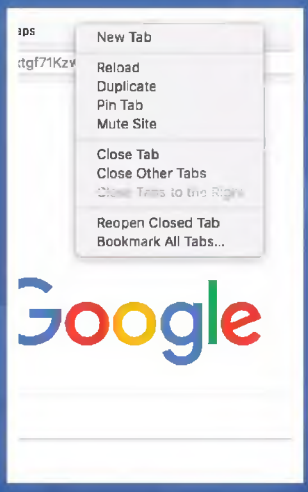
Rearrange Tabs

If you have several tabs open in Chrome, you can rearrange them easily by simply clicking on a tab and dragging it along the row to the position you want. If you want to open one of the tabs as a separate window, click on it and drag it to the desktop. Release the mouse button and a new window will open. Right-click on any tab to see the tab options menu. Here you can reload tabs, close all tabs to the right of the selected one and even reopen closed tabs (Chrome remembers the last ten closed tabs).



Pinning Tabs

Another useful thing you can do with tabs is pin them. Pinning tabs means that whatever is shown on the tab when it is pinned will automatically be loaded when you next open a new Chrome browser window. To pin a tab, right-click on it and select Pin Tab from the menu. Pinned tabs appear smaller in the row than unpinned tabs. To unpin a tab, simply repeat the process and select Unpin Tab from the menu.

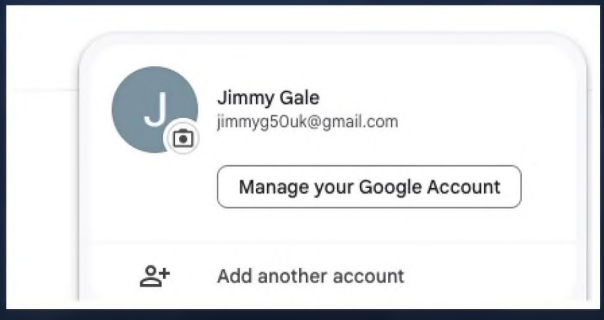


Start-up Preferences

By default, when launching a new window in Chrome, the browser displays the New Tab page, which is a blank tab with links to your most visited websites. It is possible to customise this. Click the Settings icon and select Settings. Under the On start-up section, choose the 'Open a specific page or set of pages' radio button and click the Set pages link next to it. Then, either click 'Use current pages' or type an address to set an alternative home page.

Syncing Chrome

With Chrome's sign in feature, you no longer need to fret about your bookmarks or apps being stuck on one computer. When you sign in to the Chrome browser or a Chrome device, your bookmarks, extensions, apps, theme and other browser preferences are saved and synced to your Google Account. You can then load these settings any time you use Chrome on other computers and devices. Signing into Chrome also makes using Google services, like Gmail, YouTube and Maps easier since you generally only need to sign in once from your browser.



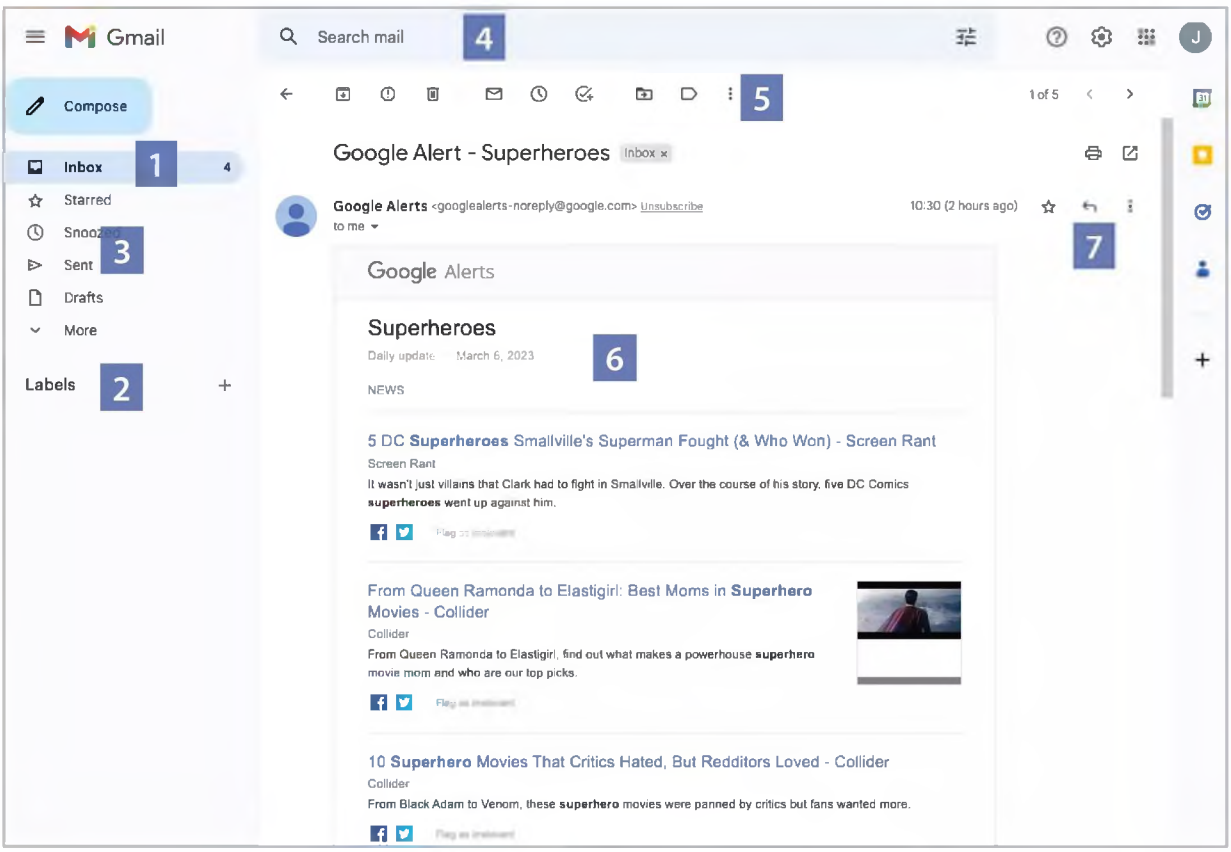
Chrome
Google

Using Google Apps

The Google app suite contains some of the world's most popular and widely used applications. Offering alternatives to operating staples such as email, maps, calendar, photo editing and so much more. Having set up your Google account, you can then access the entire suite for free. Over the following pages, we will take you through our expert tips to ensure that you make the very best of each one.

Get Started with Gmail

Gmail is an integral element of the Google app suite, an email platform that works seamlessly on whichever OS you use, quickly becoming a key part of your daily routine.



Creating a Gmail Account

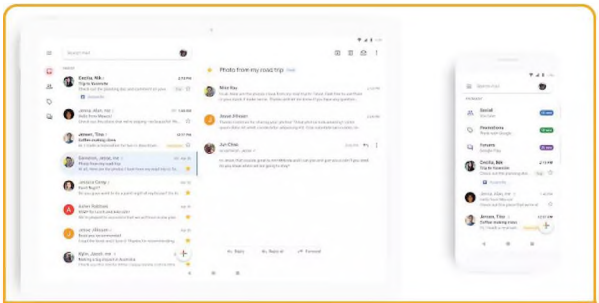
You can either connect a Gmail account to your main Google account or you can create a completely new account from scratch. If you connect an account, you will be able to use your new Gmail address or your original Google account email to sign in.

1 Mailboxes

These links let you display the messages in those mailboxes. A number next to any mailbox shows the amount of unread messages, rather than the total amount in the mailbox.

2 Labels

Labels allow you to categorise your messages into various pre-set or custom folders. You can save messages under more than one label for better cross-referencing.



Gmail on Android & iOS

You can download the Gmail app for mobile devices, free of charge, from the Play Store or App Store. This allows you to use Gmail on the go.

Once downloaded, the app should automatically sign in using the same Google account details you entered on your computer (hopefully, this is also the one with which you set up your Android or iOS device).

You will now be able to see all of the folders and emails you use and have sent/received on your computer, albeit on your smartphone or tablet.

3 Chat Controls

This section shows a list of your available Chat contacts, as well as containing the various chat controls: Add Contact, Status Update, etc. You can read more about Gmail Chat later.

4 Search Box

Search for any message or contact in your Gmail inbox. Clicking on the small arrow at the end of the search box allows you to refine your search in several different ways.

5 Message Controls

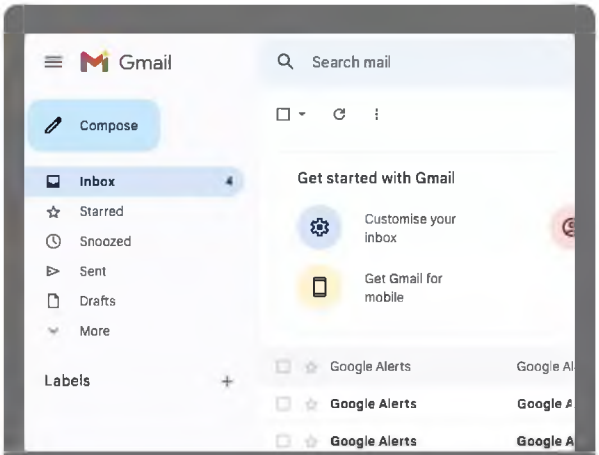
This set of buttons only appears when viewing a message. They allow you to archive, delete or report the message as spam, as well as letting you move the message to a particular mailbox or apply a label. The More button reveals more controls.

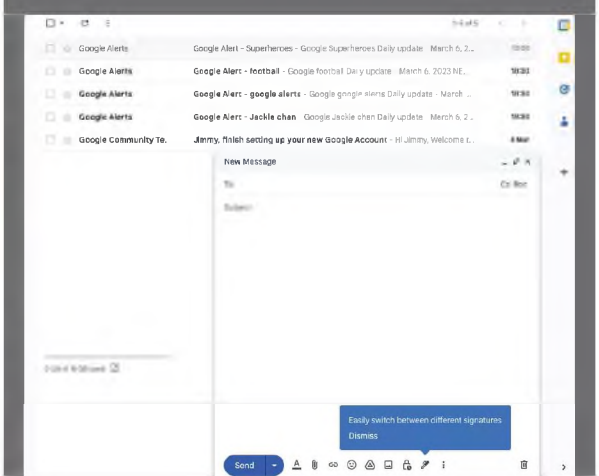
6 Conversation

Gmail displays multiple messages from a contact in a conversation format. If someone replies to your message, both the reply and the original message are shown stacked in the window. Expand the conversation to make it easier to read.

7 Quick Reply

Click anywhere in this box to start a quick reply to the last message in the conversation. To Forward a message, click the Forward tab in the quick reply window that opens. Quick reply offers the same formatting options as a new message does.





How to Compose a New Mail

Google has incorporated a unique way to compose a message in Gmail which allows you to retain on screen whatever you were looking at, inbox, a message, etc. while composing a new message in a separate window. At the time of writing, this was still an optional feature but could be made standard at any time.

To activate this compose window, click the Compose button and a new window will open at the bottom right of the Gmail window. Whatever you were viewing before you clicked Compose will remain on screen but you can click through into a different mailbox or open a message without the compose window disappearing.

The new compose window contains many of the options. Click in the To field and start to type a name or email address to see a list of known contacts. The icons at the bottom let you control formatting and attachments. If you want to switch back to the old compose method, click the Send icon at the bottom of the window.

How to Customise Gmail

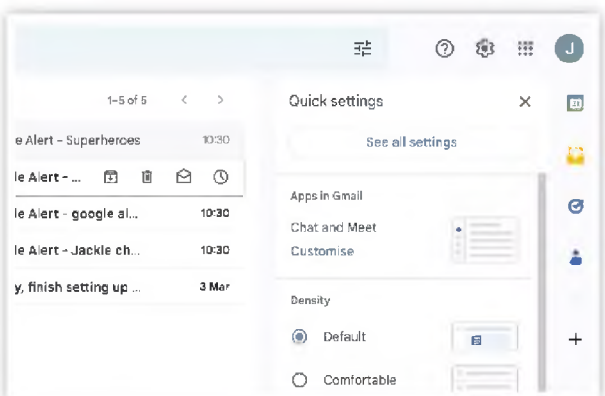
Gmail works brilliantly straight out of the box. There are, however, several things you can do to Gmail to make it suit your personal preferences more closely, from adding a theme to customising the layout of the inbox.

Apply a Theme

OK, so this isn't going to make Gmail work any better, run any faster or deliver emails in a different way but it does brighten things up a bit and makes Gmail more personal to you.

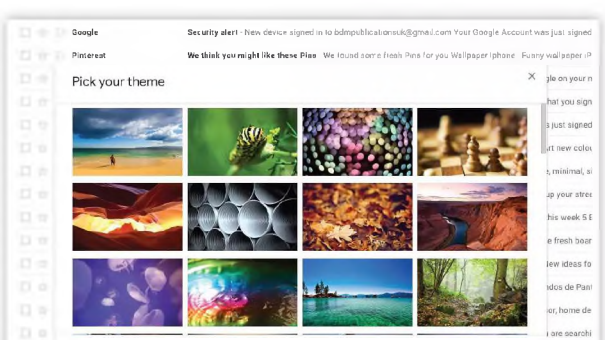
Step 1

Sign in to Gmail on your computer and open the main inbox. In the top right corner of the page you will see the Settings icon (the gear icon). Click this and select Themes from the listings displayed on this page.



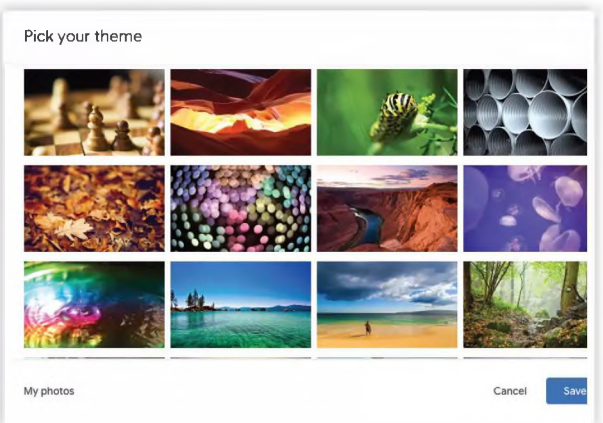
Step 2

The available themes are split up into categories, with basic colour themes at the top of the page, then HD themes that use background images, custom themes and classic Gmail themes.



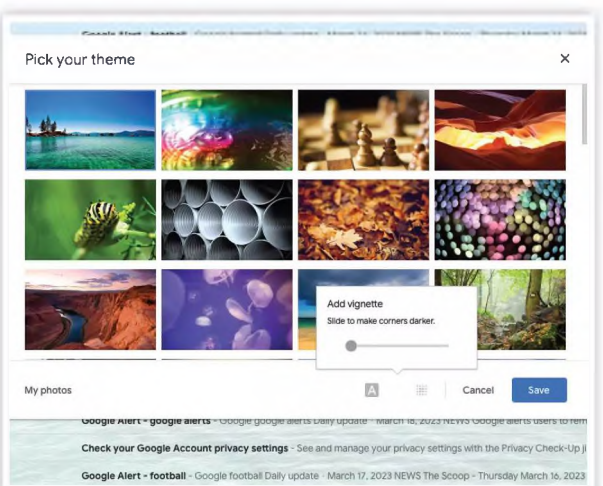
Step 3

Click on any theme to activate it. You will see the background change, allowing you to preview the theme without leaving the themes page. If you find one you like, simply select it and then click back to the inbox.



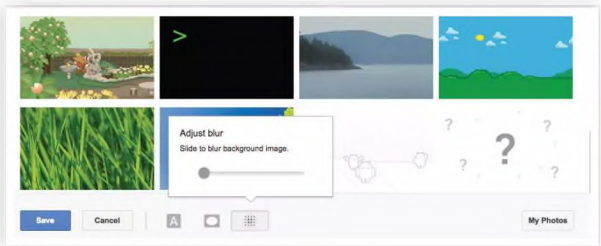
Step 4

Custom themes let you get a bit more creative. Click on either Light or Dark custom and then choose an image. You can use a preselected image or use one of your own via My Photos.



Step 5

Once you have Chosen the Theme you wish to show on your Google Mail page, you can also add a customisable level of blur to the image which may make some text easier to read. To do this click the third icon to the right of the Cancel button.

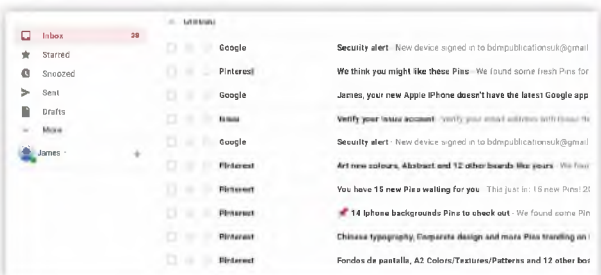


Customise the Inbox

You can easily customise the main inbox to show important or starred emails in a separate section at the top of the page.

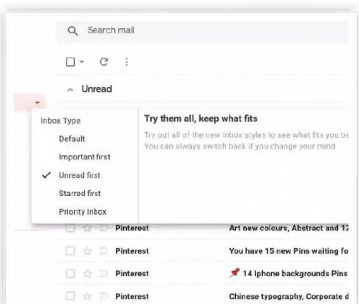
Step 1

Log in to Gmail and click on the main inbox to select it. With the main inbox displayed, hover the mouse pointer over the inbox label and you should see a small, down-pointing arrow.



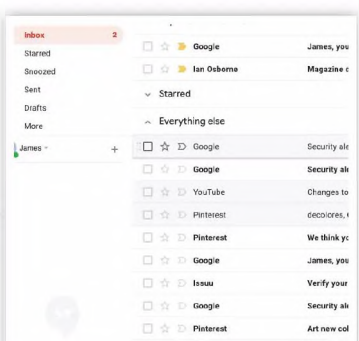
Step 2

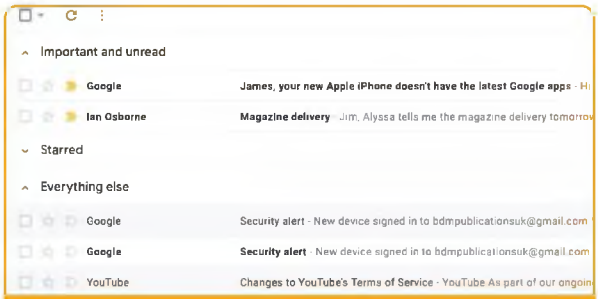
Click on the arrow to see a small menu. Here you can choose the way emails are displayed in the inbox. Roll over each of the settings to read a short description of how they work.



Step 3

Choose a display option and you will see the inbox split into sections. At the right-hand side of each section heading, another drop-down menu lets you further customise the section: number of emails to display, etc.

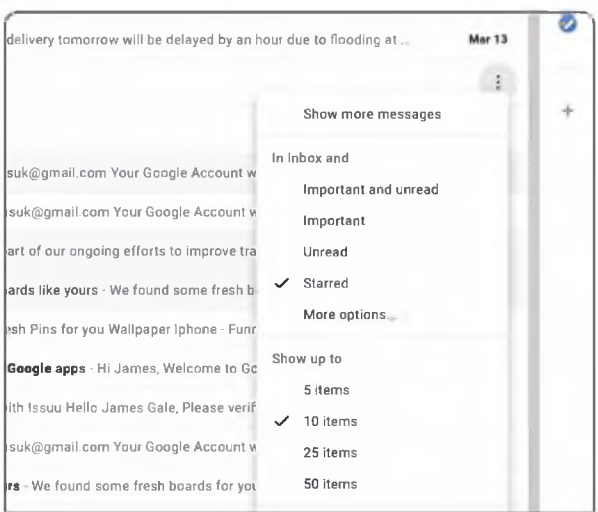




Importance Markers

How exactly does Gmail decide if an email is important to you or not? The answer, is very cleverly and sometimes with a bit of help from you. Gmail displays different coloured markers next to emails to indicate different types of messages. A yellow marker means that a message is important. An empty (white) marker means that the message is not seen as important.

If you want to know why a message was classified as important, you can hover your mouse over the importance marker in order to see the main reason why. To teach Gmail that messages from a certain contact are important, all you need to do is find an email from that person and click on the unfilled importance marker.



Show or Hide Labels

On the left-hand side of the Gmail interface is a list of your different mailboxes and labels. Preset mailboxes (or System Labels) include Important, Starred, Sent Mail and Drafts. It is useful to have links to your labels displayed here, but you can hide them if you wish. Click on Settings and then click on the Labels tab at the top of the page. You will see a full list of all your labels, with a show and hide link next to each. You can simply go down the list hiding those labels you don't wish to see in the sidebar.

Dealing with Gmail Spam

If you find that spam emails are still getting through the built-in filters and being displayed with your other emails, you can do several things to improve detection and removal of these unwanted messages.

Do I Need to Worry About Spam Emails?

That's a good question with a potentially very long answer, but in short, yes, spam email is best avoided. Junk or spam emails are unsolicited/requested messages sent in bulk by email.

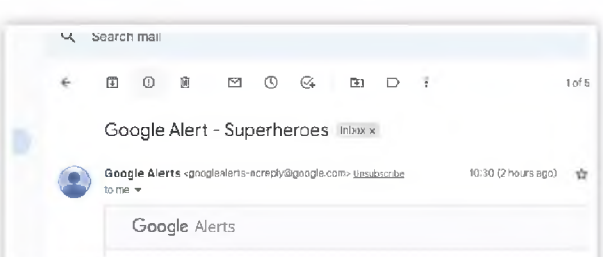
Email spam has steadily grown since the early 1990s and by 2014 were estimated to make up around 90% of email messages sent. Most spam email messages are commercial in nature and albeit harmless, they are annoying. However, some can also be dangerous because they may contain links that lead to phishing web sites, or sites that are hosting malware, or include malware as file attachments.

With this in mind, it is always best to approach spam with caution and following this guide will better equip you to avoid spam as a whole.

Report and Remove Spam

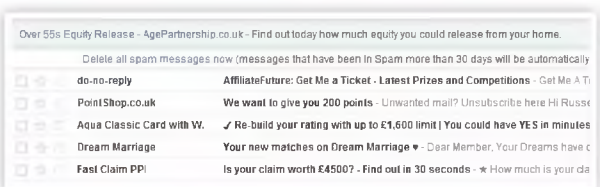
Step 1

Removing spam from your inbox is easy. Click on the message you want to remove and look for the ! button above the message box. Clicking this will remove the spam message and report it to Google.



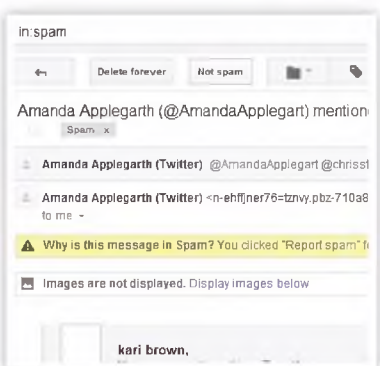
Step 2

If you want to remove the spam that is collecting in the spam mailbox, the spam mailbox will only appear in your labels when spam has been detected and moved into it, click the mailbox and then click "Delete all spam messages now".



Step 3

If you see a message in the spam mailbox which has been moved there incorrectly (i.e. it is not spam), you can correct the mistake by selecting it and clicking Not Spam from the options above it.

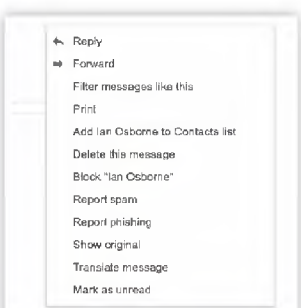


Creating Filters

Another way to deal with unwanted emails, particularly if you are getting lots of emails from one particular address, is to set up a filter.

Step 1

Open the inbox and find a message from the contact you want to filter. Click on the message to open it. Click on the More button to the right of the buttons above the message, and select Filter Messages Like These from the menu.

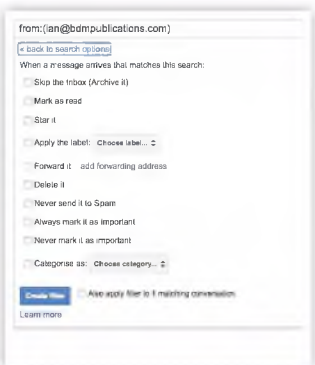


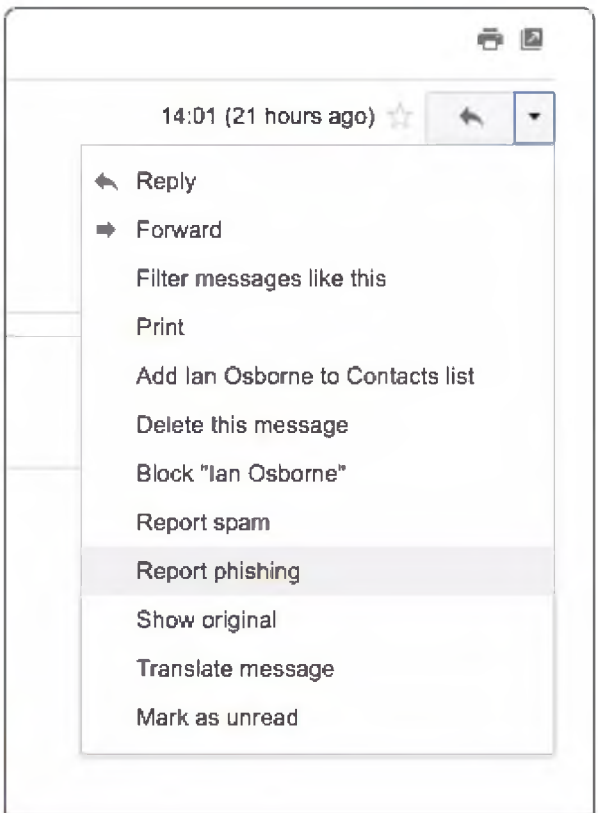
Step 2

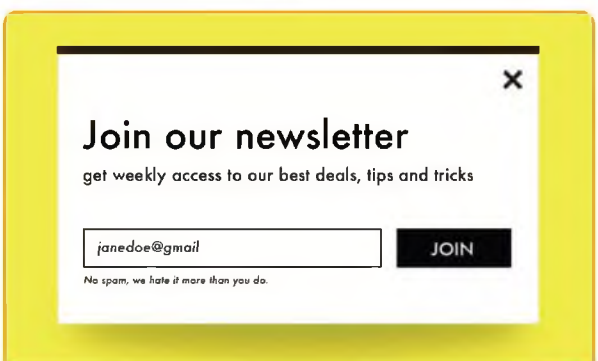
In the box that appears, the email address of the sender will be automatically entered. You can add extra triggers to the filter such as certain words or recipient addresses. Next, click Create filter for this search.

Step 3

You can now decide what to do with messages that trigger this filter. There are numerous options, and not just options for spam messages. For the purpose of this guide, choose Delete it. Click Create Filter to finish.







Protect Your Email Address

One of the very best ways of ensuring that spam does not become the bane of your life is to protect your email at all times. Entering your email address onto websites that you don't fully trust or posting the address on blogs and forums, will almost certainly lead to a whole heap of spam heading your way. Automated software (bots) scan through millions of web pages to find email addresses, which are then used by spammers to flood your inbox with unwanted emails.

If you do need to write your email on a blog or forum (in the signature for example), write it in a way that a non-human reader would not understand. For example, you could write it as john dot doe at gmail dot com (instead of john.doe@gmail.com). A human should understand how to write that email address properly.

What is Phishing?

Phishing is the process of trying to find private information such as PIN numbers, passwords and user names by trickery. Sometimes spammers create fake websites that look for example, like a well-known bank's login page. You will then get an email pretending to be from that bank, asking you to confirm your login or change some settings by clicking a link to the fake website. When you enter your email and password on one of these pages, the spammer records your information and keeps it.

Remember that banks or credit card companies will never ask you to email them your password or click on links in emails. If you are in any doubt as to the legitimacy of an email and the links within, the first thing to check is the link. Without clicking it, roll your mouse pointer over the link and look at the information that appears at the bottom of the browser window. This will show you the actual link address, letting you check whether it looks OK. If you really want to check your online bank, open a new browser window and navigate to your bank's page normally.

If the message seems like an attempt to get your personal information, click Report Phishing from the message options menu (arrow to the right of the Reply button) to help Gmail and Google learn from such attempts.

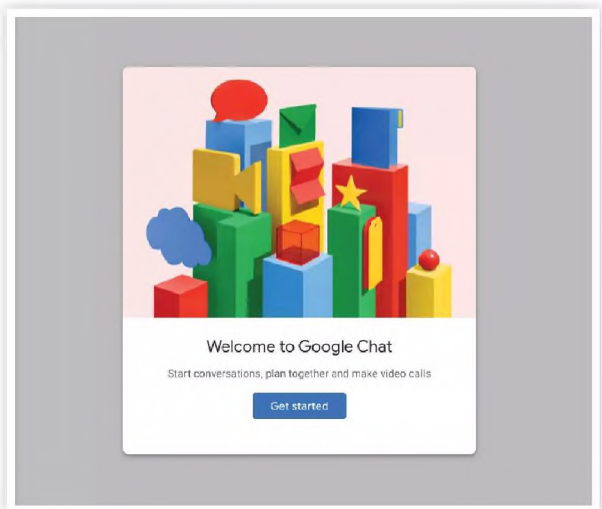
Google Chat in Gmail

You can add and chat to anyone on the Google network as long as they are using Gmail, iGoogle, Google Talk, Google+ or a third-party client. You can find the Google Chat controls on the left side of the Gmail window.

Using Chat in Gmail

Step 1

Before you can chat with someone, you need to set up Google Chat and then invite them and they will need to accept the invitation. The people you invite will see the invitation above their chat list asking if they'd like to be able to chat with you.

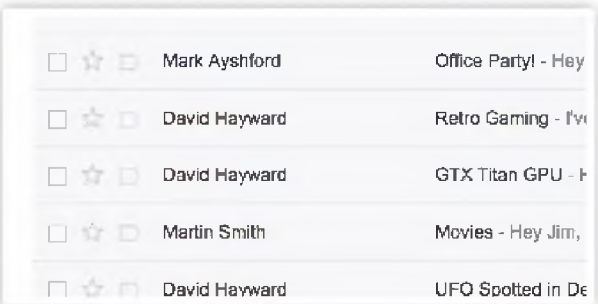


Step 2

Press the + icon, then in the search box at the top of this menu, type your friend's username. If they're already in your Contacts, Gmail will prepopulate their username. If they are not in your contacts, type their email and click Invite to Chat.

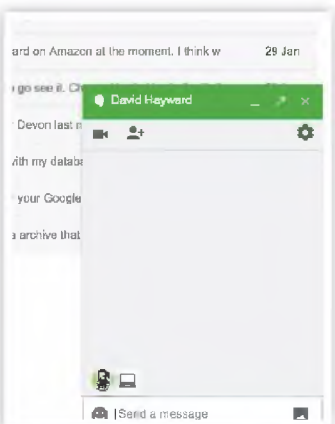
Step 3

Once someone has accepted your invitation (and if they are online) you will see a status button to the left of their name in your chat list, which indicates whether they're available (green); their name will show in bold if they have sent you a message.



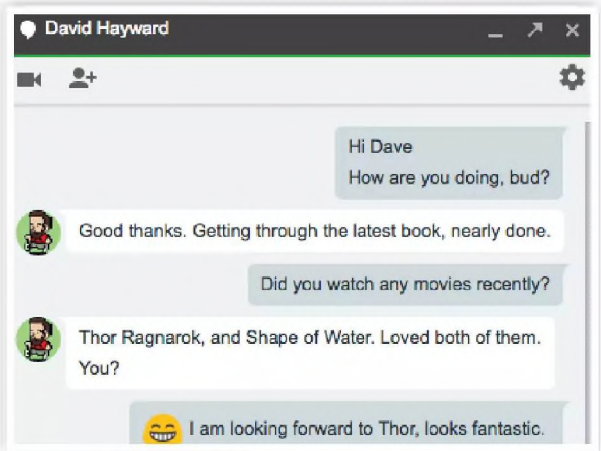
Step 4

To chat with someone who is available in your list, click on their name and a small chat window will open in the bottom right corner of the Gmail window. Click the arrow to the right of the contact's name to undock the chat window.



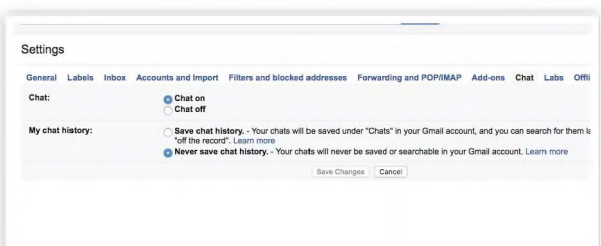
Step 5

Click in the text box at the bottom of the chat window to start typing. You can type as much as you like, the window will just expand. To add emoticons, either type a recognised emoticon symbol or click the smiley face in the chat box.



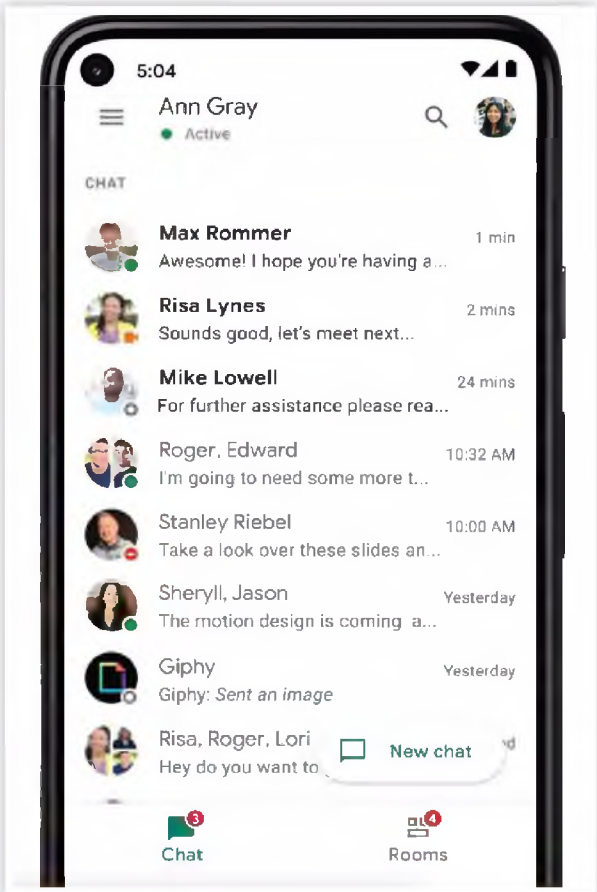
Step 6

By default, Gmail will store a copy of your chats in the chat history label. These are searchable in exactly the same way as emails. If you prefer not to keep a record of your chats, go to Settings > Chat and turn off the option.



Step 7

Just as we said previously, you can chat using a variety of Google products. If, for example, you have an Android phone, you will probably also have Google Chat. As long as they use the same Google account, they will share contacts.

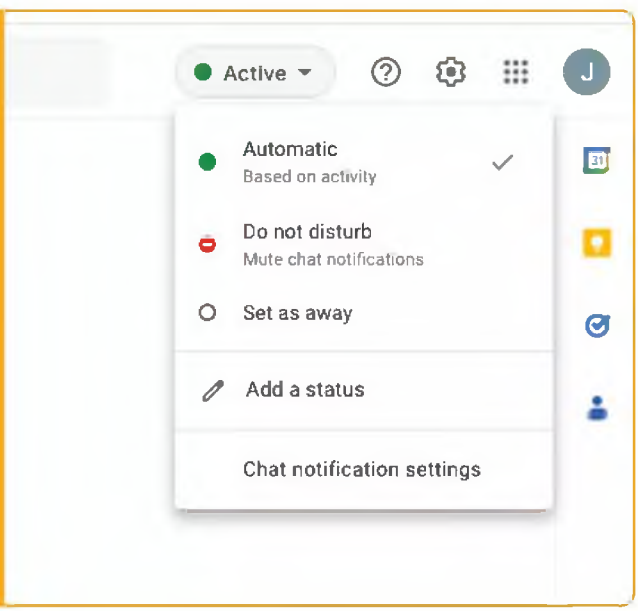


Chat Status

Your chat status controls your availability to chat with your friends. You can manually enter your status which can be viewed by all of your Chat contacts.

To change your status, click the down arrow next to your picture in the Chat list. Select the status you'd like to appear next to your name in your friends' chat lists. By creating a new status message, which appears beneath your name in your contacts chat list, select Custom messages from the status menu.

Your status message can be anything you want, from your favourite quote to a simple note to say you're hard at work or away from the computer. To clear your custom message, click the text under your name in Chat and delete it or select another message from the status drop-down menu.

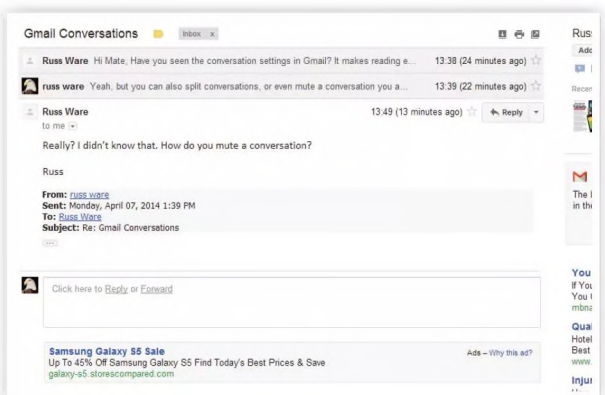


How to Use Gmail Conversations

Gmail groups all replies with their original message, creating a single conversation or thread. In Gmail, replies to emails (and replies to those replies) are displayed in one place. Here's how to use Gmail conversations to their best advantage.

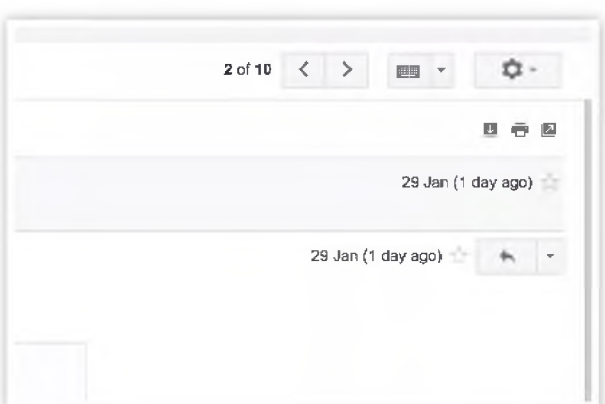
Step 1

When you open one message in a conversation, all of your related messages are stacked neatly on top of each other, called Conversation View. In Conversation View, each new message is stacked on top of the ones that arrived before it, so that the newest message is always the one you see first.



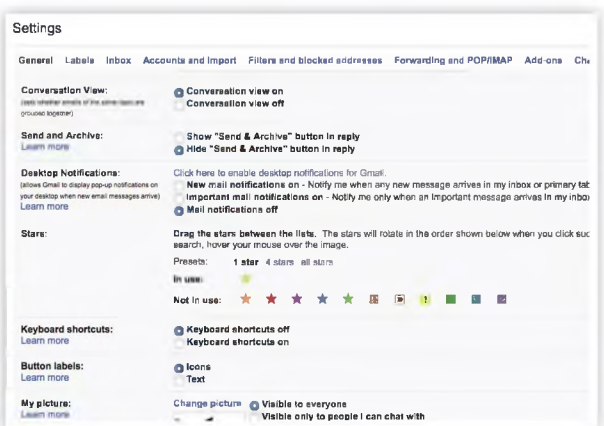
Step 2

To see all the messages in a conversation, just click the Expand all button. A conversation will break off into a new thread if the subject line of the conversation is changed, or if the conversation reaches over 100 messages.



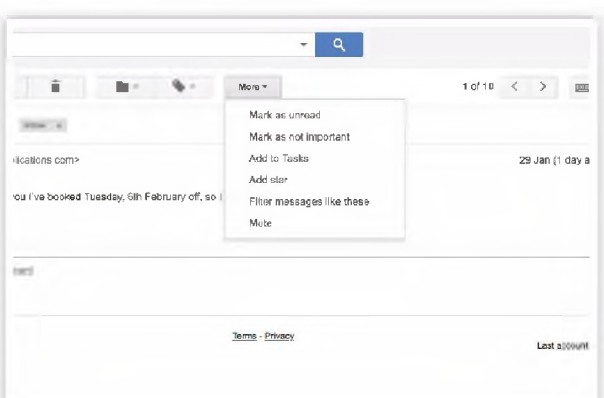
Step 3

If you like, you can change this setting so that replies aren't threaded into conversations but appear as individual messages in your inbox. To do so, go to the General tab of your Gmail Settings and check the box next to Conversation view off.



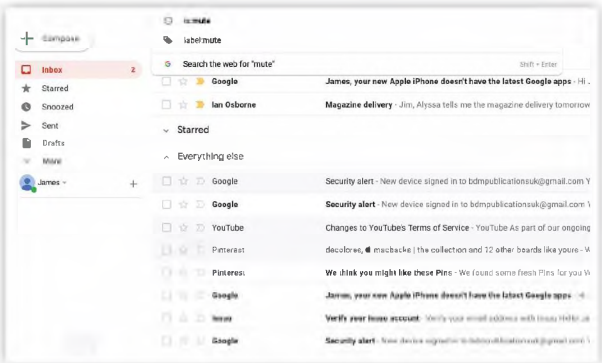
Step 4

You can mute the conversation to keep all future additions out of your inbox. Open or select the conversation and click the More button above your messages. Select Mute from the options, shown below.



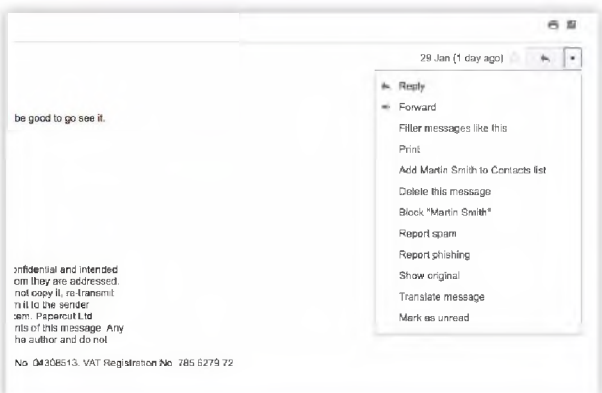
Step 5

If you need to find a muted conversation or if you accidentally muted a thread, don't worry. Muted messages are not marked as read and are still searchable. You can type is:muted into your Gmail search box to find all muted conversations.



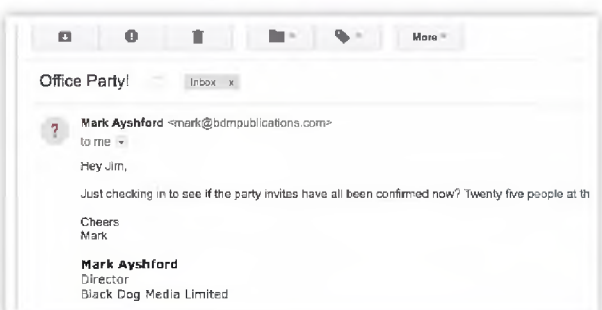
Step 6

Conversation View in Gmail can be confusing at times. To make things clearer and focus on a single reply, you can open a single email from a conversation string. To do this, open the Conversation and click on the top-right options Arrow (next to the Reply button).



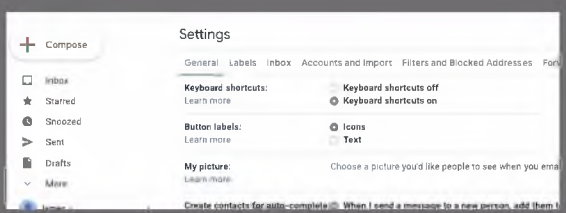
Step 7

From the menu choose Print. This will open a single email in a new tab or window. Close the print dialog window or press escape. The tab stays open so you can refer to the email and keep it open. To open a whole email conversation in a new tab, press Ctrl when you click on the email.



Using Gmail Keyboard Shortcuts

As you become more accustomed to Gmail and its many features, the use of keyboard shorts will vastly increase your productivity and make your Gmail user experience far easier.



How to turn on Gmail keyboard shortcuts

Click the gear in the top right corner of Gmail and, from there, select the Settings link. Then click on General, scroll down to the Keyboard shortcuts section and switch them on. Finally, select Save Changes at the bottom of the page.

Gmail Keyboard Shortcuts

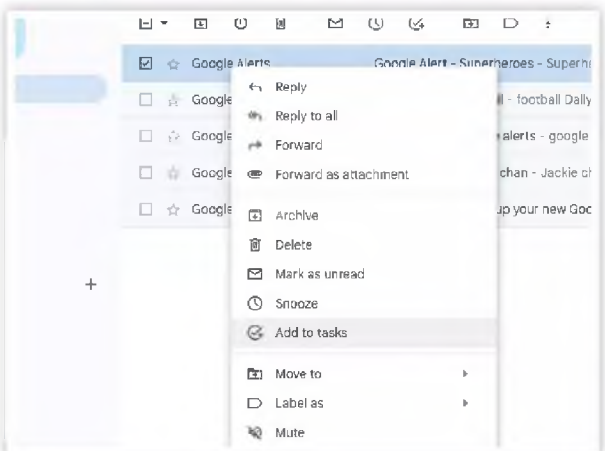
Shift + Esc	Focus on the main window
Esc	Focus on the latest chat or compose
Ctrl/Cmd + .	Advance to next chat or compose
Ctrl + ,	Advance to previous chat or compose
Ctrl/Cmd + Enter	Send
Ctrl/Cmd + Shift + c	Add Cc recipients
Ctrl/Cmd + Shift + b	Add Bcc recipients
Ctrl/Cmd + Shift + f	Access custom from
Ctrl/Cmd + Shift + d	Discard draft
Ctrl/Cmd + k	Insert a link
Ctrl/Cmd + ;	Go to previous misspelled word
Ctrl/Cmd + '	Go to next misspelled word
Ctrl/Cmd + Shift + '	Open spelling suggestions
Ctrl/Cmd + Alt + .	Go to next section
Ctrl/Cmd + Alt + ,	Go to previous section
Ctrl/Cmd + z	Undo
Ctrl/Cmd + y	Redo
Ctrl/Cmd + Shift + -	Decrease text size
Ctrl/Cmd + Shift + +	Increase text size
Ctrl/Cmd + b	Bold text
Ctrl/Cmd + i	Italics text
Ctrl/Cmd + u	Underline text
Ctrl/Cmd + Shift + 8	Bulleted list
Ctrl/Cmd + Shift + 9	Quote
Ctrl/Cmd + Shift + l	Align text left
Ctrl/Cmd + Shift + e	Align text centre
Ctrl/Cmd + Shift + r	Align text right
Ctrl/Cmd + Shift + x	Strikethrough
Ctrl/Cmd + \	Remove formatting
g + i	Go to InBox
g + t	Go to Sent messages
g + d	Go to Drafts
g + c	Go to Contacts
g + k	Go to Tasks

Create Tasks from Gmail

One of the most useful planning tools Gmail includes is the ability to create tasks from any message you receive. This tutorial will show you how to use this little known feature of the Gmail application to its full potential.

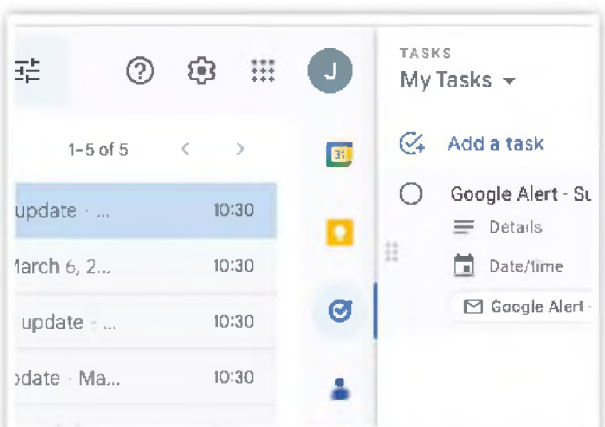
Step 1

Open Gmail on your computer and find the email you want to create the task from. Open the email or select it by checking the box next to it in the main inbox list. Both actions will bring up several new options along the top of the email pane.



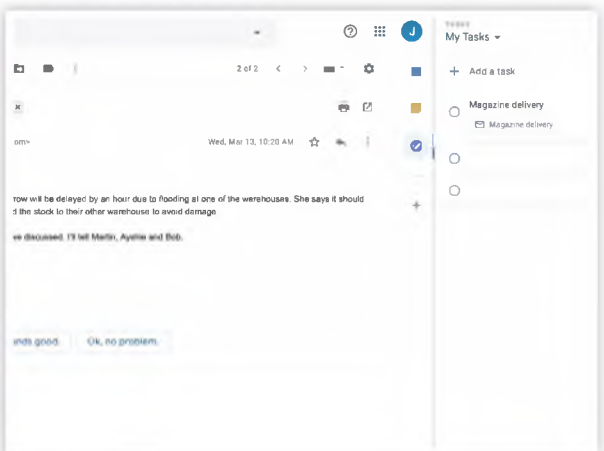
Step 2

Click the More button at the top and then click Add to Tasks. You can also use Shift-T. When you do this a tasks list panel will appear in the bottom right corner of Gmail. Any tasks you have added, from any source, will be listed here.



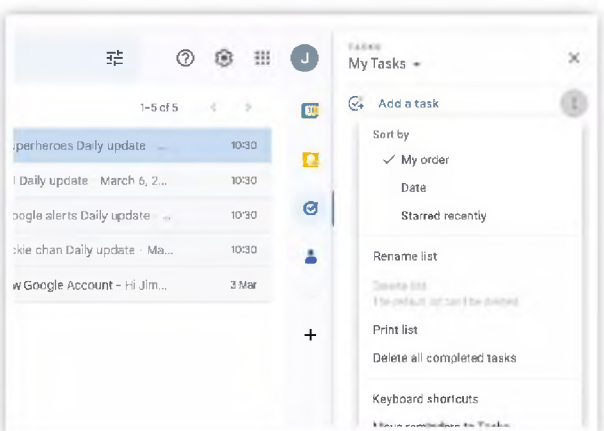
Step 3

The latest task will be shown at the top, labelled using the subject of the email. Click on the arrow next to the task title and you can change details such as the due date, add notes and move it to a different task list if you have one.



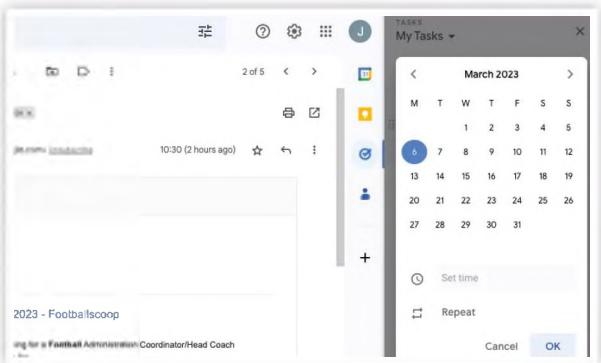
Step 4

To show a task as completed in the list, check the box next to it. The task will stay in the list as a reminder. If you want to remove a task from the list, select it and click the trash icon at the bottom of the Tasks pane. NOTE: It cannot be restored.



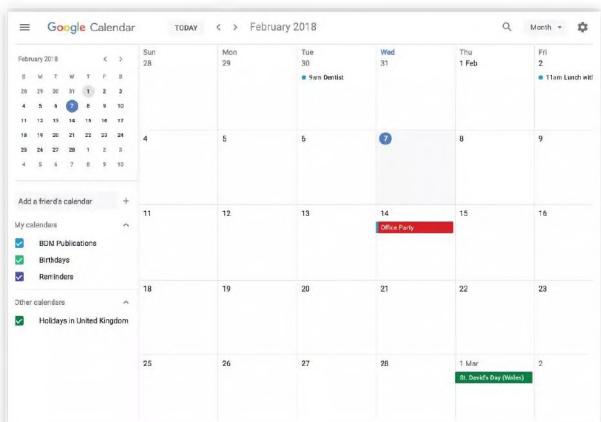
Step 5

Once you add a due date to a created task, it will appear in your Google Calendar on that date. If you go into Calendar and can't see the task, make sure that the Tasks option is highlighted in the left-hand sidebar. You can change the colour of shown tasks using the drop down menu.



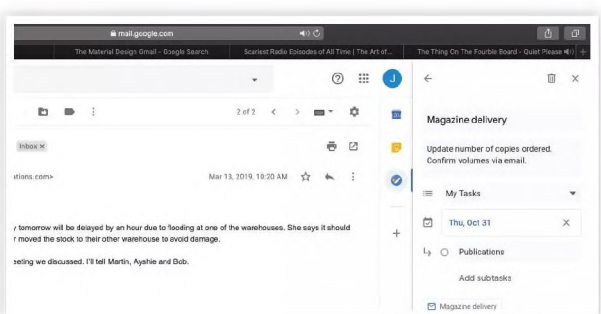
Step 6

When the Tasks option is selected in Calendar, a new sidebar will open on the right to show all tasks. You can manage tasks from here or from in the main Calendar panel. If you don't want the sidebar to be displayed, click the X to close it.



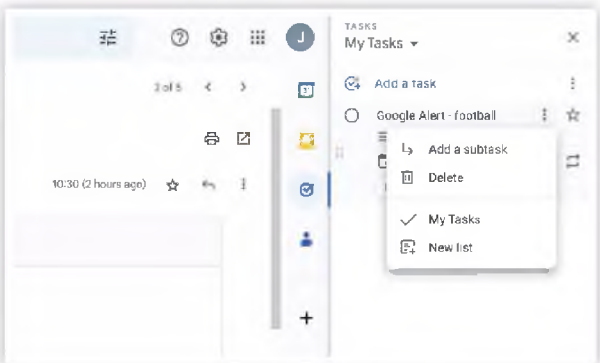
Step 7

Once you have created a task from an email, go back to the Tasks panel in Gmail where you can add additional tasks as part of that main task. To show that the task is a sub-task, you can indent it. Click anywhere in the tasks panel and hit Enter.



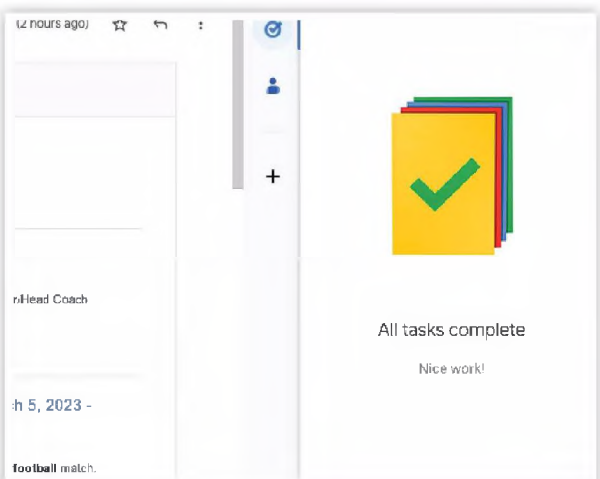
Step 8

Select the new task and type a title. Like any other task, you can use the arrow to go in and set a due date and notes. Go back to the list and highlight the sub-task. Click Actions and then select Indent. The title will indent, showing that it is part of the task above it.



Step 9

To remove an email association from a to-do item in Gmail Tasks, highlight the desired task. Press Shift-Enter and then click the X next to Related email option. Once the related email is removed, it can't be added again.



Tasks Shortcuts

Using the following keyboard shortcuts can speed up the processes above.

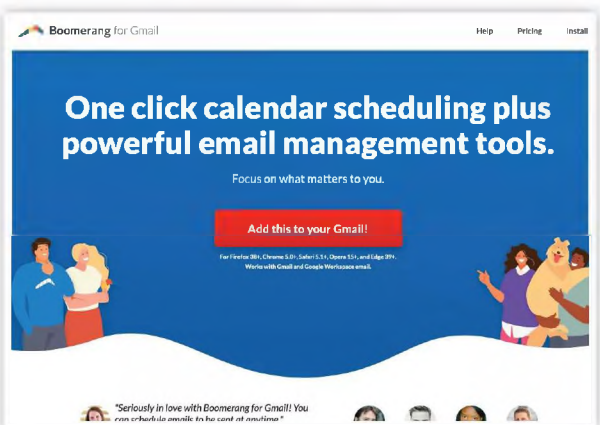
Shift + Enter:	Enters task detail view
Esc:	Exits task detail view
Space:	Marks a task complete or incomplete
Enter:	Enters inline edit mode
Backspace:	Deletes a task
Alt + Up:	Moves selected task up
Alt + Down:	Moves selected task down

Schedule Your Gmail Messages

With an additional bit of software, Gmail can be set up to send specific emails at scheduled times. This is particularly useful if you are sending emails to recipients in different time zones.

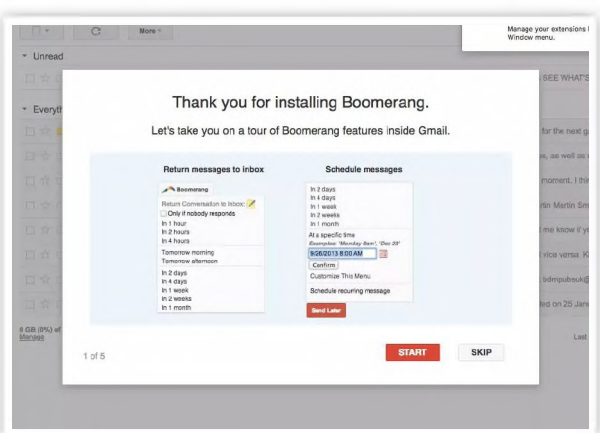
Step 1

The first thing you need to do is download and install the Boomerang software for Gmail. Open your Chrome browser and search for "Boomerang for gmail" or point your browser to www.boomeranggmail.com. In addition to letting you schedule emails, Boomerang offers several other features too.



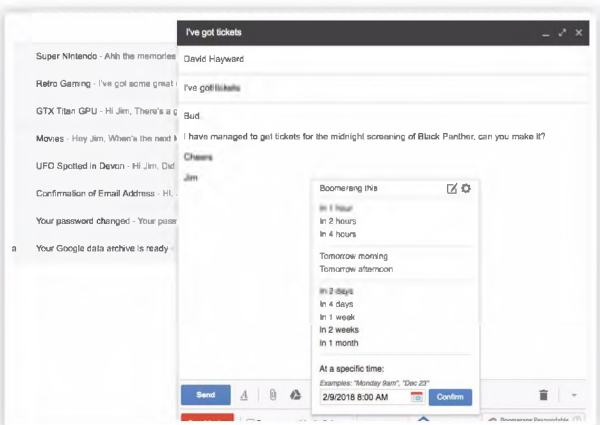
Step 2

With Boomerang installed you will see a new Send Later button with a Boomerang icon. You can now write an email when it's convenient, then schedule it to send automatically. Just write the message, then click the Send Later button.



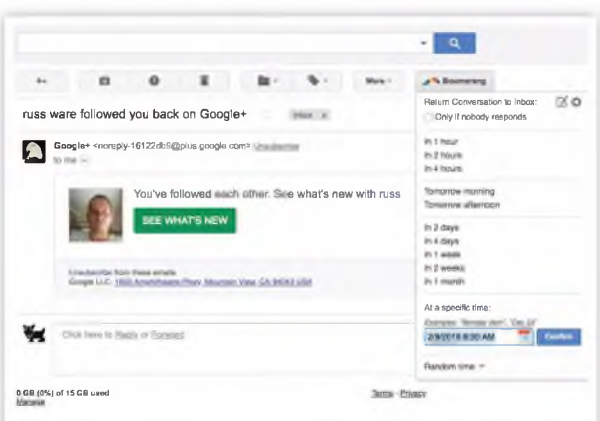
Step 3

From the popup menu, schedule the sending time with either the handy calendar picker or text box. The smart menus display your most frequently used scheduling times for easy access. Boomerang will then automatically send your message at the chosen time, without you having to worry about it.



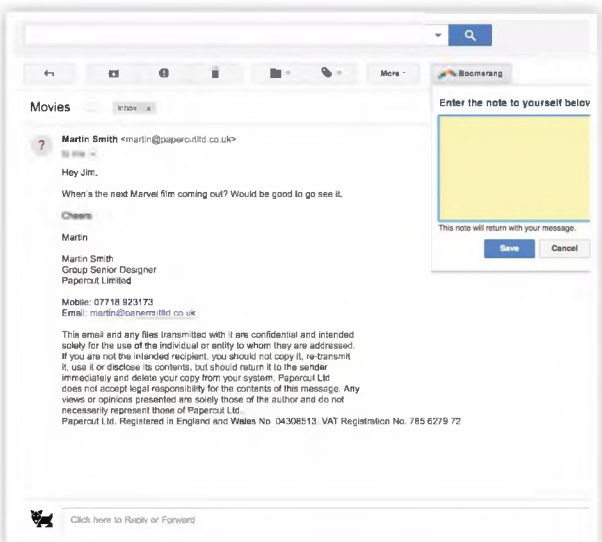
Step 4

You can also set up email reminders. This means taking messages out of your inbox until you actually need them. At the scheduled time you chose, the software will bring it back to your inbox, marked unread, starred or at the top of your list.



Step 5

This function is useful to remind yourself about stuff that is weeks or months away but you may forget why you wanted to keep it in the first place. You can attach a note to the message as you schedule it. When the message returns to your inbox, your note will be added to the email thread.

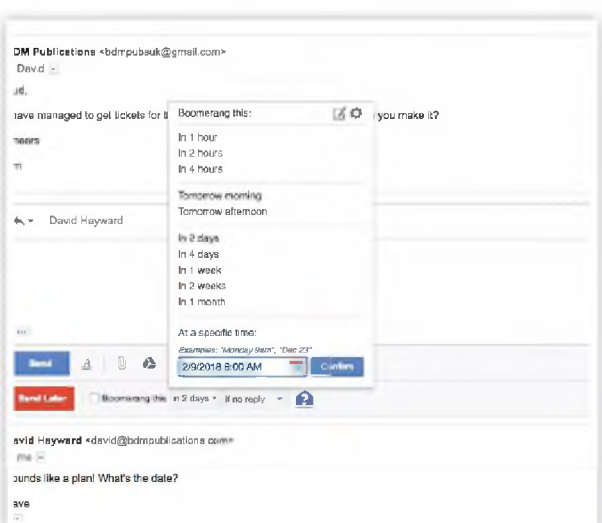


Boomerang Extras

Boomerang is a useful and rather powerful tool that can play an increasingly important part in how you use your Gmail account. Here we will be looking at some of the extra functionality it offers.

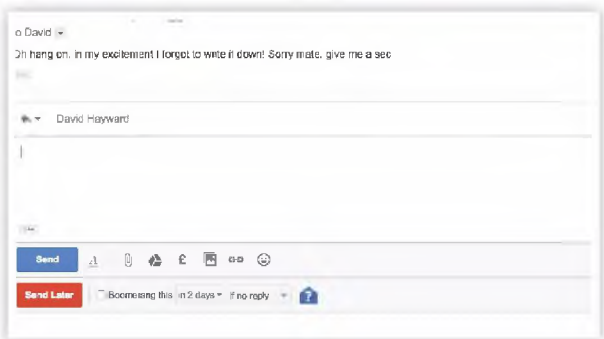
Step 1

One of the other useful features here is tracking responses. When writing an email, you can set Boomerang to give you a reminder if you don't get a reply after a certain amount of days. If the message comes back to your inbox without a response, you can then send another email to follow up.



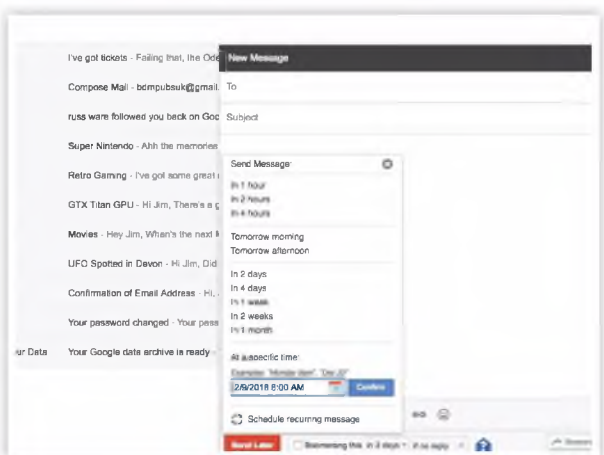
Step 2

You can schedule your follow-up message as you're writing the original email. If the person replies to your original email, Boomerang will detect the response, and will not send the second email. If they don't reply, the software will send the follow-up message automatically.



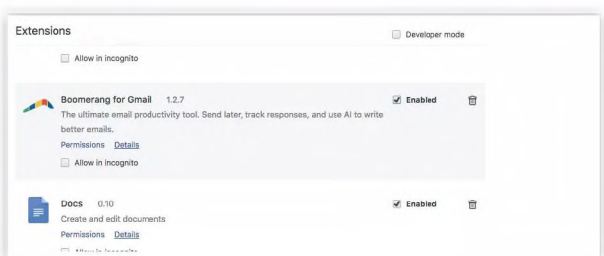
Step 3

You can also send recurring emails. All you have to do is write a message as you normally would, then click Schedule Recurring Message from the bottom of the Send Later menu. From the menu, you can then choose the start date, frequency, day of the week to send and end date.



Step 4

To remove Boomerang from your computer, first uninstall the plug-in from your browser. Now revoke Boomerang's access to Gmail data. Right click the Boomerang icon in your browser and click Manage Extensions. Now disable Boomerang and then click the Bin icon to delete it.

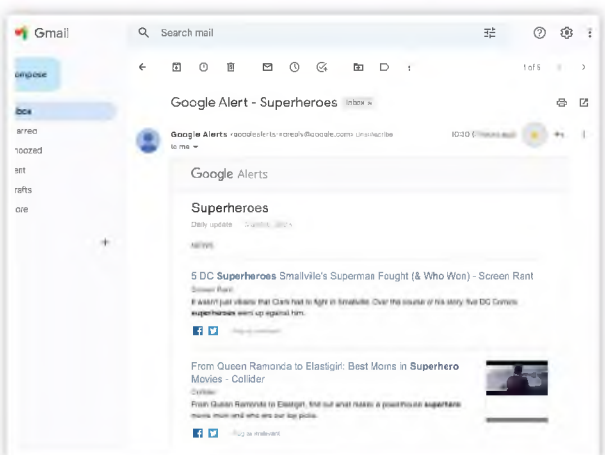


Gmail User Tips and Tricks

You can be up and running with the basic Gmail in seconds, or you can spend ages customising it and getting it set up in several different ways. Even if you have been using Gmail for a while, there are probably dozens of tricks that you never even knew were possible.

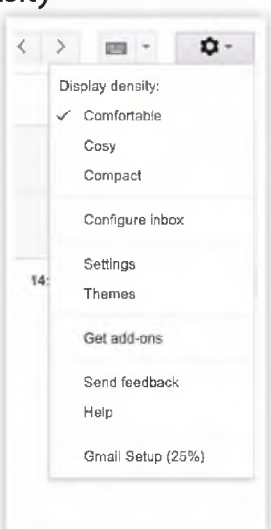
Add Stars to Messages

You can mark a conversation or message that appears next to the item in your inbox with a star. Stars can be an eye catching way to mark a special message or even a great visual reminder to follow up on an item later. Stars will only appear to you and not to anyone else, so you won't offend your friends by starring their messages rather than reading them. To star a message from your inbox, just click the Star icon next to the sender's name. You can also add a star when reading a message by clicking the icon on the top right of the message.



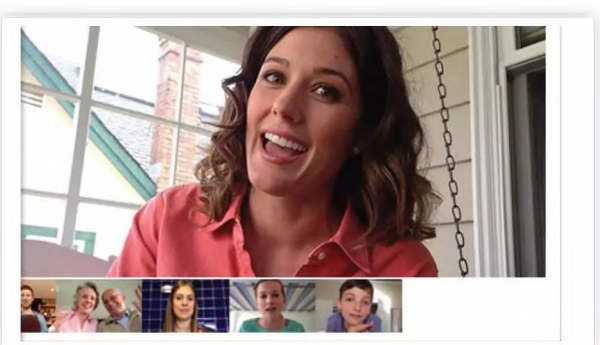
Customise Display Density

Gmail automatically adjusts the amount or "density" of information on a page when you adjust your browser window or when you use different sized screens. If you prefer a denser view whatever size your monitor, you can set a limit on your Default Density. This setting reflects the lowest density (the most space) permitted for your account. Choose how many messages are on your screen at a time by clicking on the gear icon and then selecting from Comfortable, Cosy or Compact.



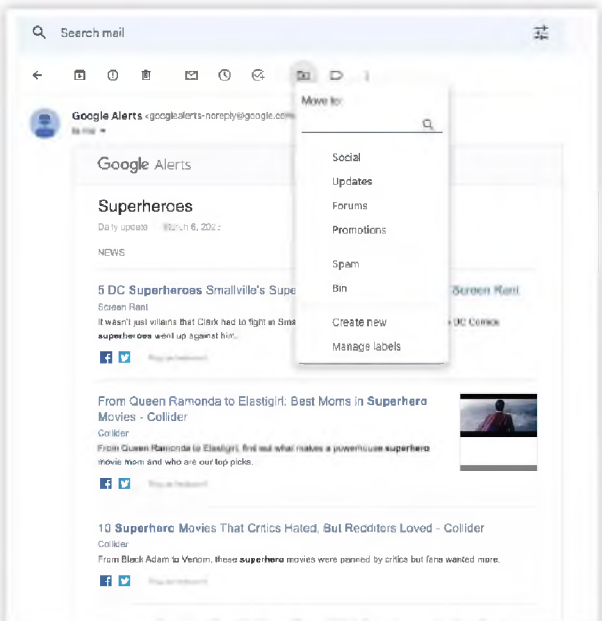
Voice and Video Chat

With Gmail, you can now use voice and video chat services such as Google+. From within these services, you can have an actual conversation with someone or even chat face-to-face over video. To get started, download the voice and video chat plug-in from www.google.com/chat/video, quit all open browser windows and install the plug-in. Sign in to Gmail, Google+ or Chrome OS device.



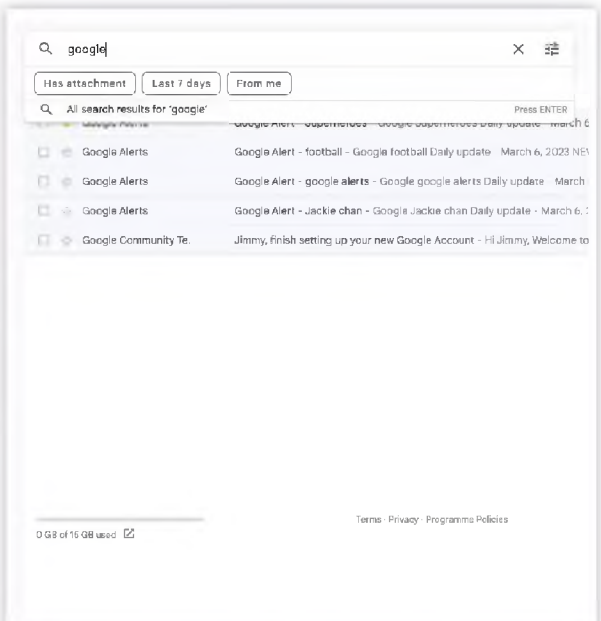
Labelling Your Emails

Labels help you organise your messages into categories such as work, family, to-do, read later, jokes, recipes, etc. Labels do all the work that folders do but with the added bonus that you can add more than one to a message. Only you can see your labels, so whether you mark a message with "Best friend" or "Read later", the sender will never know. You can create a new label for a message in your inbox by selecting the box next to the message, clicking the Label button above your message list and then clicking Create New.



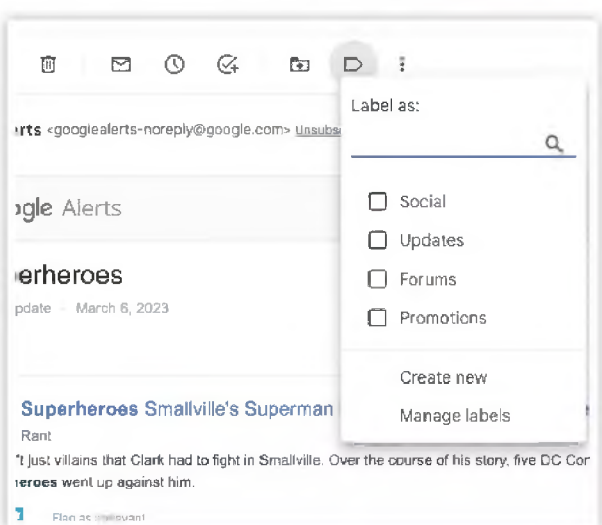
Search Your Mail

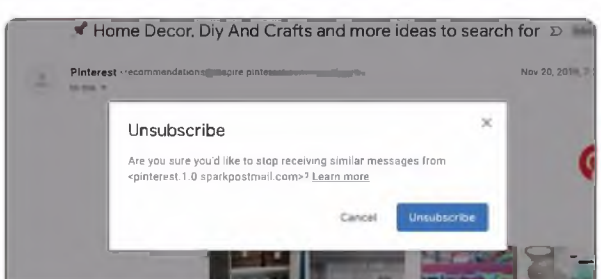
It can be a pain to scroll through old emails just to find the one you need, which is why you might want to try searching for it instead. For example, if you're looking for a message that contains the word "shopping", simply type "shopping" in the search field and click the Search button. Your results will be displayed with your search results and within the message highlighted in yellow. If you're having trouble finding the result you want, you can refine your query by clicking the small arrow in the search box and entering your criteria in the appropriate fields.



Clean Up Your Inbox

You can use the Move To button at the top of your inbox to easily move a message out of your inbox and add a label at the same time. If you have lots of labels, you can pick the one you want by typing the first couple of characters and letting auto-complete find the right one, or alternatively create a new one.





Instant Unsubscribe

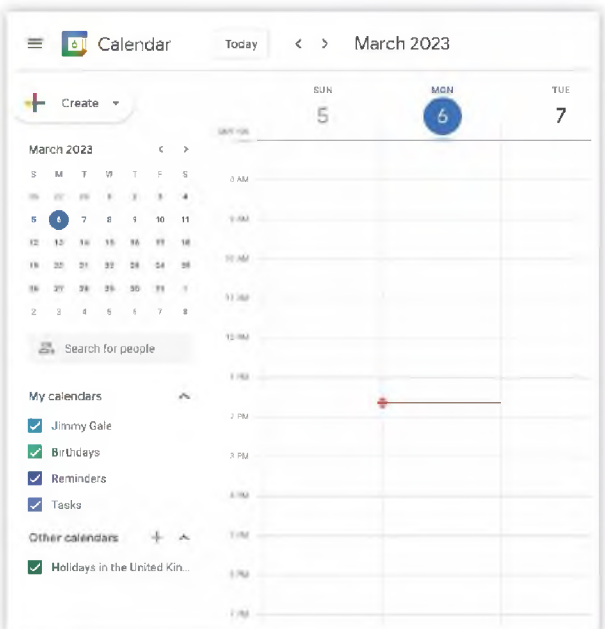
No matter how much you try to stop them, if you have purchased something online or sign up for something free you will be most likely added to a mailing list. Said lists are often a very valuable tool, alerting you to possible special offers and updates on a subject that interests you. Alas most are not and are simply random filler for your inbox. When you receive such an email, and you wish to make it your last from the sender, look to the sender address at the top of the email. Here you will notice the Unsubscribe link. Click this link and confirm by pressing the blue button to stop receiving email from this sender.

Improving the Google Calendar

Google's free online calendar app is perfect for keeping track of all the important events in your life. And if you use other Google products such as Android or Gmail, you can set things up so that everything integrates and syncs perfectly and with barely any effort.

Creating Events

There are three ways to create a new event on the desktop version of Google Calendar. Which method you use depends entirely on which you find easiest or most convenient.

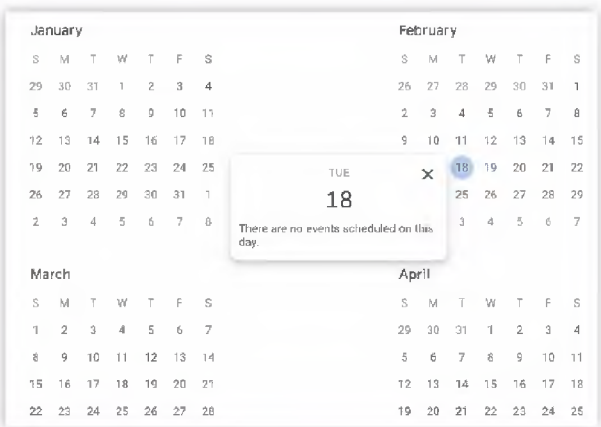


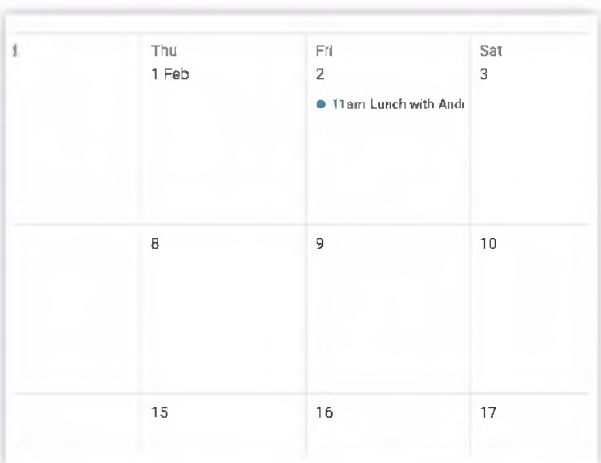
Click on the Date

Open the Google Calendar screen and scroll to the date and time where you want to mark an event. If you need to look far ahead, click on the month view button at the top of the screen. You can then scroll through whole months by clicking the forward and back arrows, also at the top. If in Week view, you can click and drag on the event location if you want it to spread over more than a single hour. If in Month view, you only have the option to click, although you can change the length of the event afterwards. Type the title and event time for your new event in the box. Finally, click Create event to publish the event to your calendar immediately or click Edit.

Using Quick Add

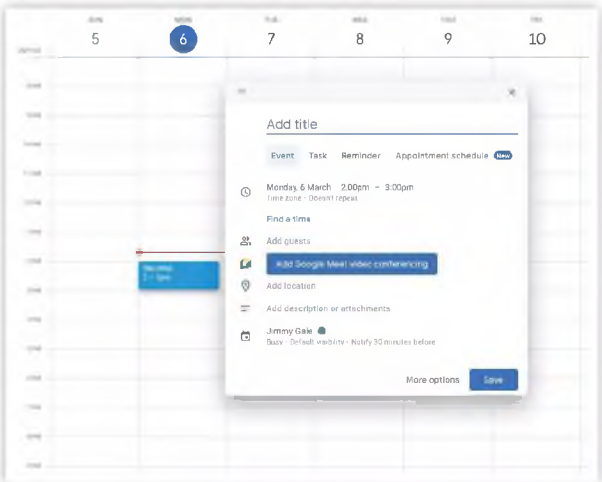
To use Quick Add simply type "Q" while you're in Calendar. Quick Add can almost read your mind. If you type in something like "Lunch with Dad at The Ivy 1pm Friday", Quick Add can figure out what you mean and pop the new event right onto your calendar. Just remember that for Quick Add to work at its best, you need to include: what, event title, e.g. lunch; when, time and date or day; who, if there is anyone else to include in the event; and where, location of the event.





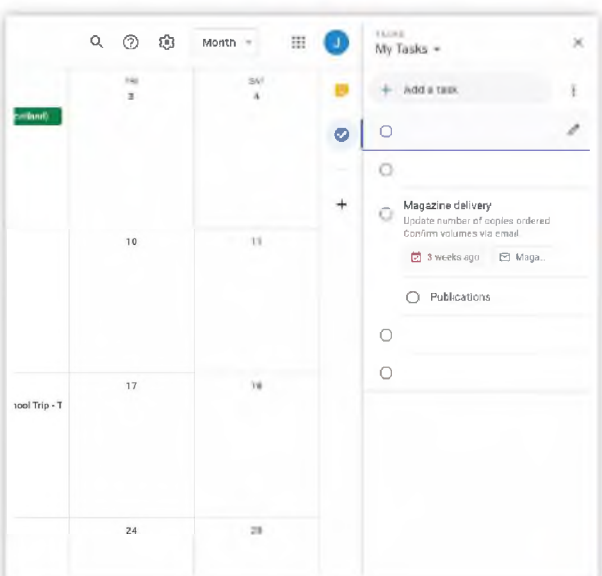
Click the Create Button

Just click on the Plus sign in the bottom right of your Calendar window, this will bring you to a page where you can enter as much information as you'd like about your event. On this page, you can also add guests, change a reminder setting and publish your event to other users. Once you've entered the appropriate information and selected the desired settings, click Save.



Using Google Tasks

You can access Google Tasks directly from the Calendar application. By linking these apps together you can quickly work between the two as follows. Open Google Calendar and log in if required. Now click the Tasks icon from the sidebar found on the right hand side of the window. Click Add a task and then start to enter your details via the new task link in Google Calendar. You can now add tasks to this listing. You can directly add an item from this list to your Calendar by choosing a date in the properties of the task itself. You can edit a task directly from the Calendar app by clicking the pencil icon. From this link you can change the details and move or delete it.

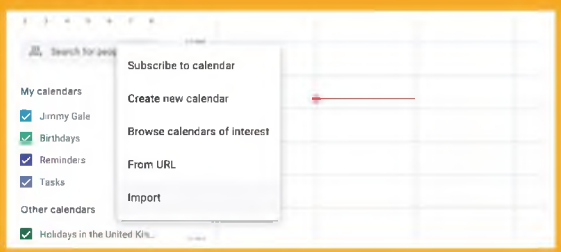


Create a New Calendar

With Google Calendar you are not restricted to having one calendar crammed with all your birthdays, events, appointments and holidays. To make things less messy, it is possible to create several calendars if, for example, you want to keep personal and business entries completely separate.

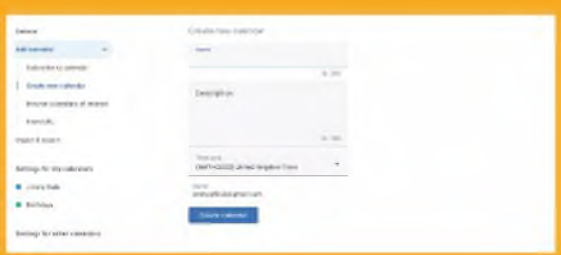
Step 1

At the left-hand side of the Google Calendars screen, look for the section labelled Other Calendars. Click on the small arrow button and select Create New Calendar.



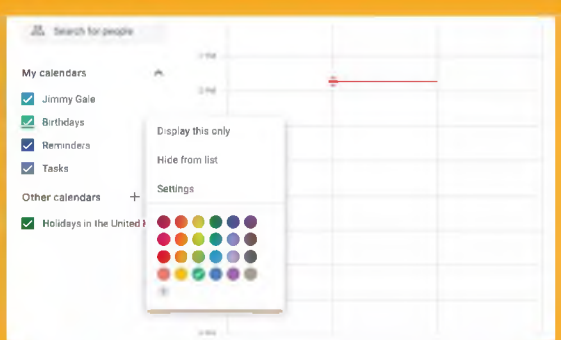
Step 2

Give your new calendar a title and write a description if you wish. The location box is useful if the calendar is to be public, as it makes it easier for your friends or family to find events on it.



Step 3

All of the calendars you create will be listed under My Calendars on the left side of your page. Just click on the name to select it. For each of the calendars, you can add, delete and edit events any time you like.

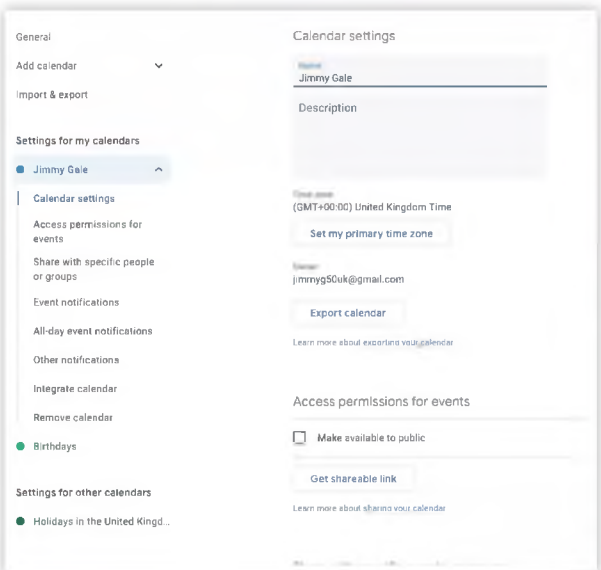


Sharing Your Calendar

It is possible to share your different calendars with individuals or groups. An email invitation is sent and the contact will be able to view your calendar alongside theirs.

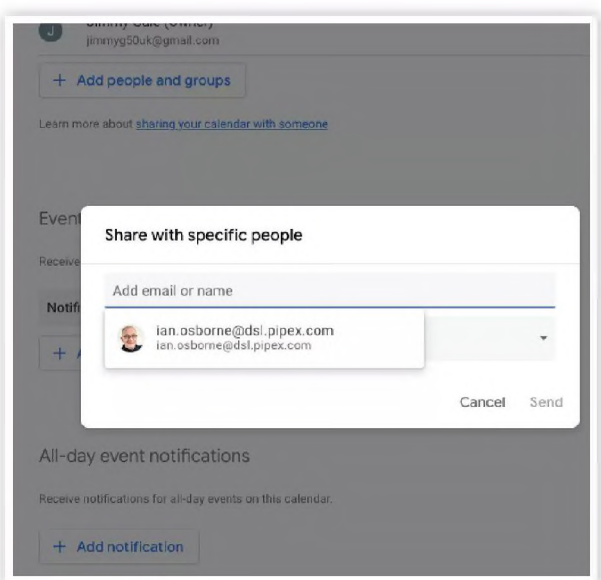
Step 1

Log in to your Google Calendar and look for the calendar list on the left-hand side of the screen. Roll the mouse over the calendar you want to share and click the small arrow button. Select Share this Calendar from the drop-down menu.



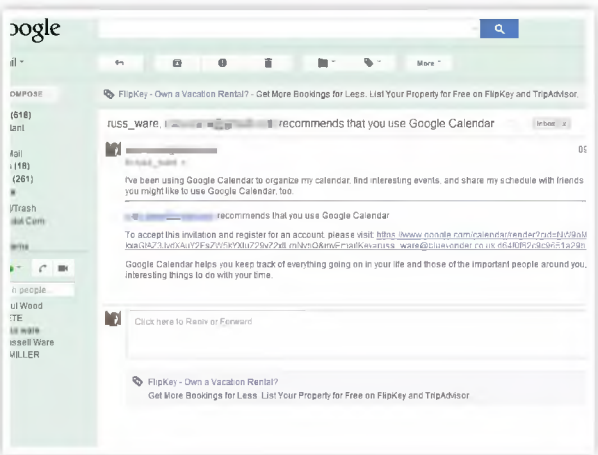
Step 2

Enter the email address of the person with whom you want to share your calendar. From the drop-down menu on the right side, select a level of permission (view only or view and make changes), then click Add Person. Click Save to finish.



Step 3

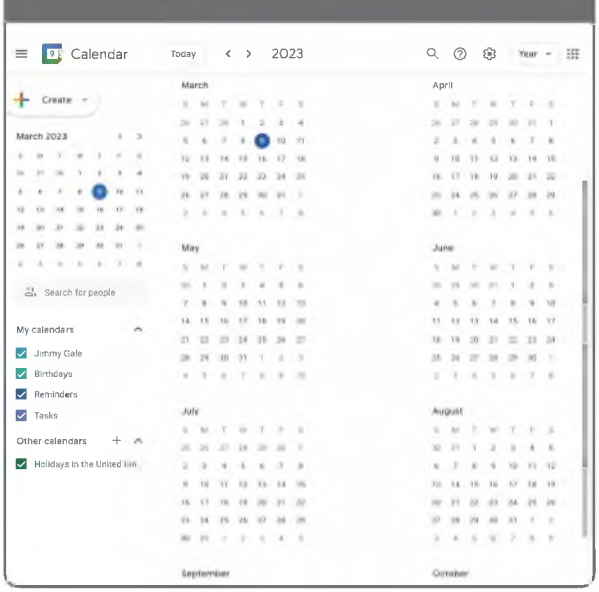
Once you click Save, the person with whom you selected to share the calendar will receive an email invitation to view your calendar. The person will need to click on the link contained in the email to add the calendar to his/her Other calendars list.



What Platforms are Compatible?

Google Calendar uses the iCalendar (iCal) file format to save/share its calendars and the relevant information. Having been created in 1988, this open source software was quickly adopted by a wide array of developers for use in their platform specific calendar apps. What follows is a listing of the platforms and applications that will be compatible with Google Calendar files.

- Apple
- Yahoo!
- eM Client
- Mozilla
- IBM
- Microsoft Outlook
- Novell GroupWise

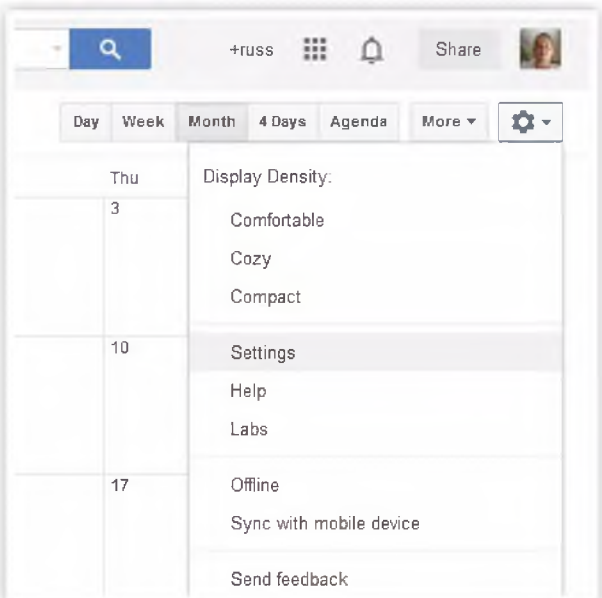


SMS Reminders

If you have Google Calendar on your Android smartphone, your events and reminders can be automatically synced between desktop and mobile. If you don't have Google Calendar on your phone, it is still possible to receive reminders on your mobile.

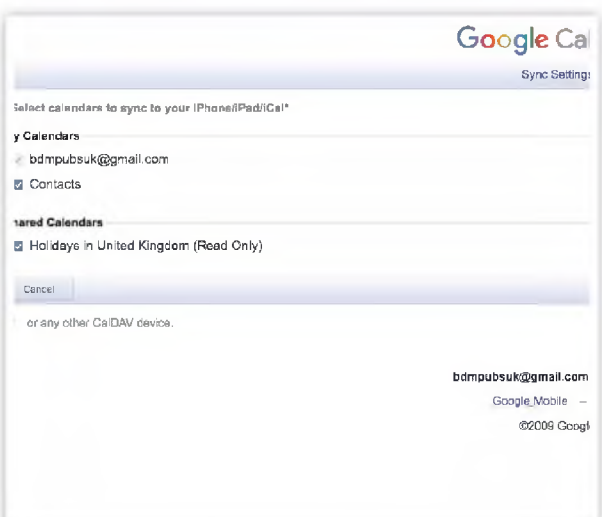
Step 1

The first thing you need to do is obtain a verification code. This will show you that your phone and carrier is capable of receiving SMS reminders from Google Calendar. Click on the gear icon at the top of the page and select Settings.



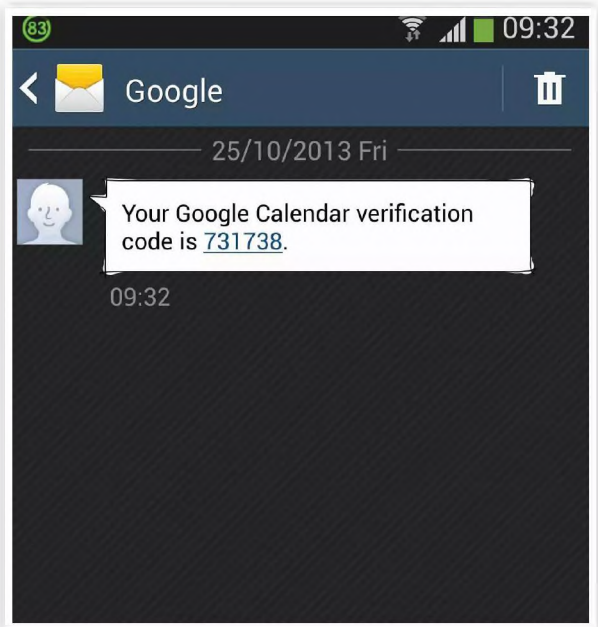
Step 2

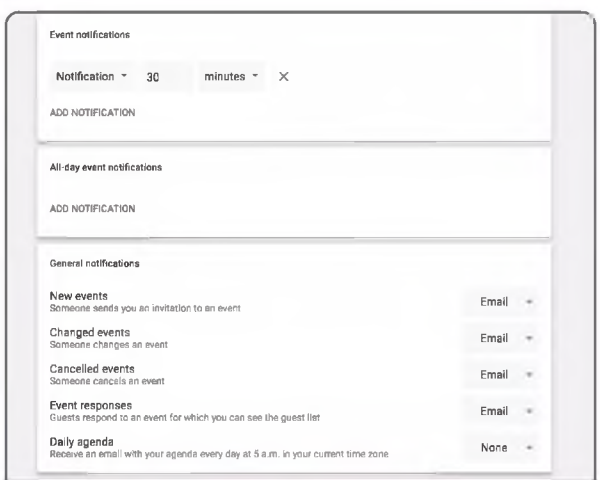
Click on the Mobile Setup tab at the top of the settings page. Select your country from the drop-down list and then enter your full mobile phone number. You may also need to select your carrier from the menu that appears.



Step 3

If your carrier is supported, click the Send Verification Code button and you receive a text message on your phone. Once you receive this message, enter the code you received in the Verification code field and click the Finish setup button.



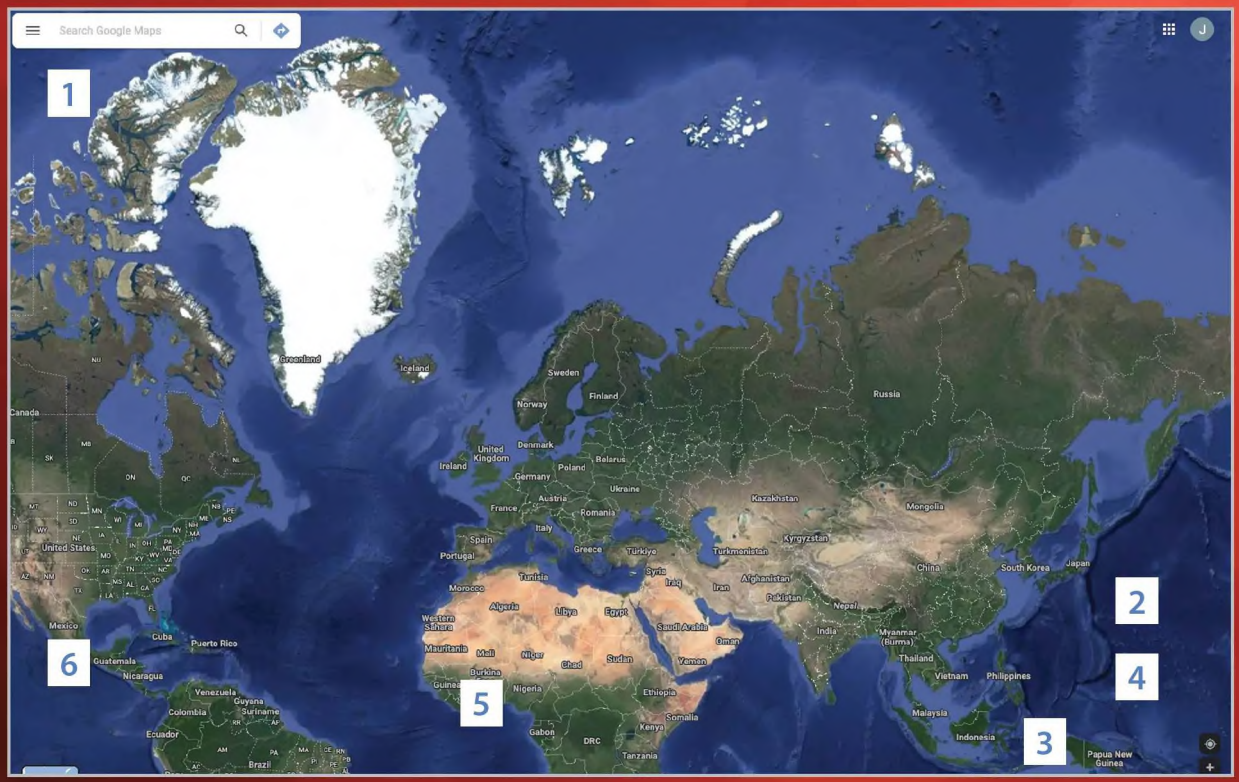


Notifications

Google Calendar offers a variety of notification options for both email and SMS. When selected, you receive notifications when somebody sends you invitations, updates, replies, or cancellation messages to events. Event organisers however may still choose not to send these notifications when they create or change events. If you deselect the notification options in these settings, you won't receive the respective notifications, even when event creators explicitly click to send invitations or updates.

Get Started with Google Maps

Google Maps is a great service that you view in your web browser or via the app. Depending on your location, you can view basic or custom maps and local business information, and that's just the start. Here's how to get started using Google Maps.



1 Search Maps

You can search for places (towns, cities, addresses) and businesses using the search box at the top of the page. Search for a location and the view will switch to show that location. Search for businesses and the view will remain the same but red dots will appear to show individual businesses. If you search for "railway stations Devon" the map will zoom to the location (Devon) and show all known railway stations in that area.

You can also search for individual businesses by name. If there is more than one business with that name, a list will appear to the left of the map, showing the addresses of each of the businesses. Click on the business in the list to be taken there.

2 Pan Controls

You can use this control to move the view up, down, left and right. You can also scroll around the map by clicking anywhere on it (you will see the mouse pointer change to a hand) and dragging the map in the direction you want to move.

This is a quick and easy way, not only to show off the impressive visuals this app contains but also make navigating easier too.

To navigate around the world with even greater ease; press and hold the mouse button or press your finger on the touch screen, then move the mouse or swipe around the screen. You can also press the hold the SHIFT key to hold the central position and move on a point.

3 Street View

Click on the little man and drag him onto the map. Any road or street that is overlaid in blue can be viewed in Street View. You simply drop the man at the location you want to view. Once in Street View, you can split the map screen so that half shows the map view and half shows the Street View. To do this, click on the box in the bottom right corner of Street View.

4 Zoom Controls

Click the + and – buttons to zoom in and out of the map. You can also click on the slider and drag it up and down to zoom more quickly. If you have a mouse with a scroll wheel on it, you can use this to zoom in and out of the map much more easily.

5 Information Box

Many businesses are shown on the map with an icon next to the name, particularly restaurants, hotels and pubs. Click on the icon to pop up the information box. This will show you the address details, links to reviews and to a website if applicable. You can also click the Directions link to quickly open the Route Planner menu.

6 Map Layers/Map View

These controls let you switch to a flat map view, as well as add layers of information that can be overlaid on the map. These layers include traffic, weather, webcams, photos, public transport information and many others.

MapsGL

You now also have the option to use MapsGL. MapsGL uses new technology called WebGL (Web-based Graphics Library) to enhance the Google Maps experience. WebGL brings 3D graphics to your browser without the need to install additional software. This allows Google to provide seamless transitions between various levels of imagery and different map views. You can view some buildings in 3D and parts of the map using 45 degree aerial images. This is still a beta test of the feature, so it doesn't work everywhere you want to look.

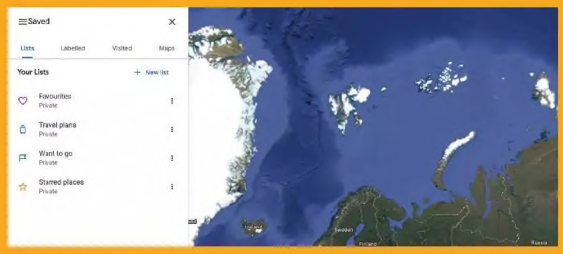
MapsGL requires a certain level of specification in your computer to work. You can check out the recommended specifications at www.maps.google.com.

Your Places

Your Places makes it easy for you to organise content relevant to you on Maps, including maps you have created with My Maps, businesses you have rated in Google+ Local and locations and directions you have previously searched for.

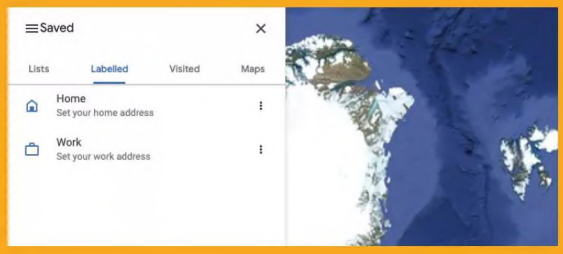
Step 1

To access your content, open Google Maps and click on the Your Places link. If you're not logged in to your Google account, you'll be prompted to sign in before continuing. Your content will appear in the left panel.



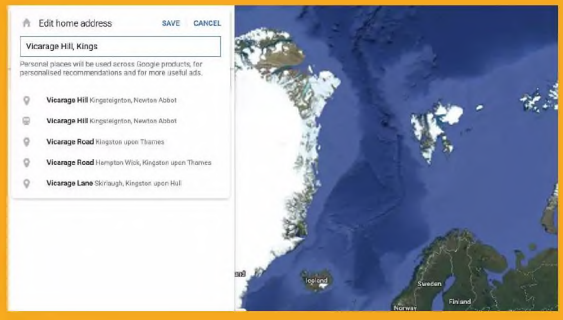
Step 2

Click the tabs at the top to see specific types of information. Your ratings, check-ins, and directions will appear under the More menu. To add a Home and Work location, click on the relevant button.



Step 3

To delete content, click on the "X" icon to the right of any item. Note that deleting information from the Your Places tab will also permanently remove it from any related activities.

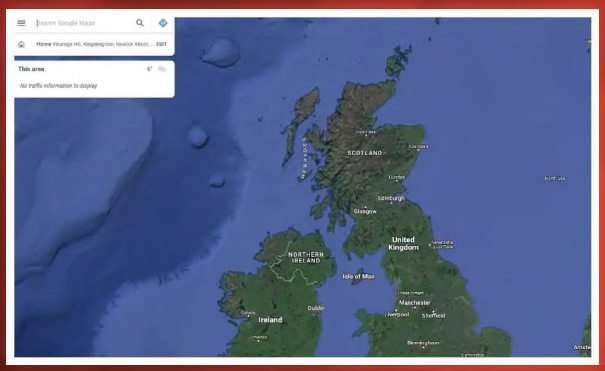


Planning a Route with Maps

Google Maps features a very powerful, and normally very accurate, route planner. You can plan a route by car, on foot or even using public transport. If you save your route to My Maps, you can easily access it again on your mobile device.

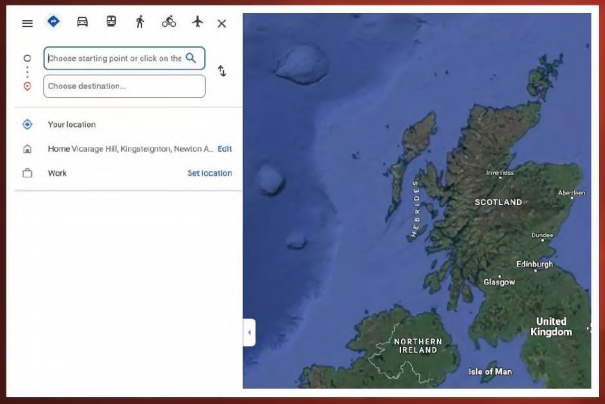
Step 1

Click on the Apps icon at the top right of the Google Search home page and select Maps. The map, normally zoomed out on the country you live in, will be shown on the page and a search box, which will act as your navigation hub. Note: If you aren't signed in to your Google account, do so now.



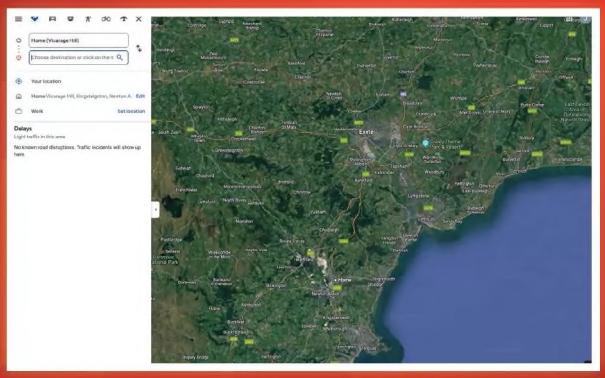
Step 2

Click on the blue arrow on the search box. Two boxes will appear in the blue bar, these are start and destination input points, along with buttons to choose your mode of transport. These include travelling by car, on foot, by public transport or by bicycle. Click on the mode of transport you will be using.



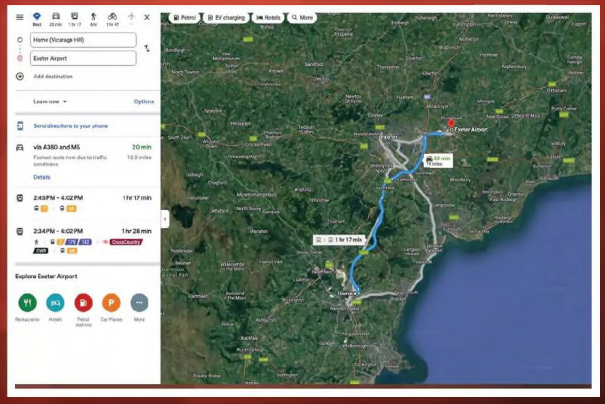
Step 3

In the start box, type the starting point for your journey. If you have added a home address to My Places, and if your journey starts at home, you can simply type Home in the first box. If not, type your preferred starting locations. This can be an address or even just a town or city.



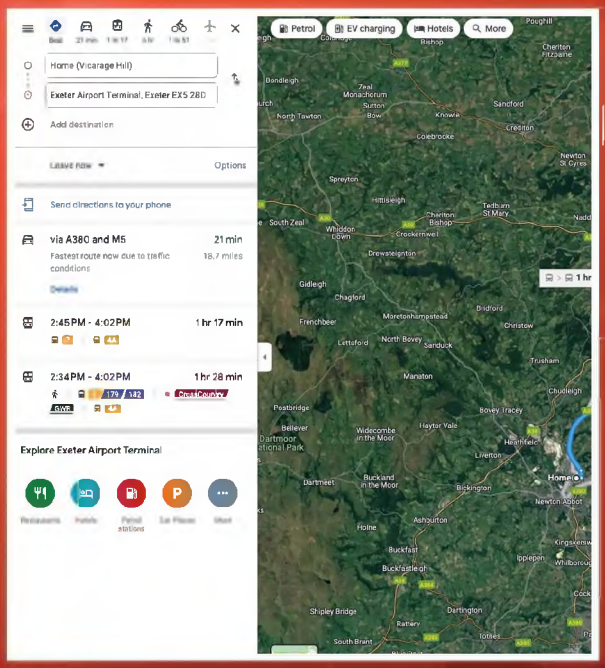
Step 4

Type your destination in the second box. Again, this can be an exact address or a town or city. Suggestions will appear as you type, so make sure you select the correct address; there will almost certainly be more than one instance of your street name to be found.



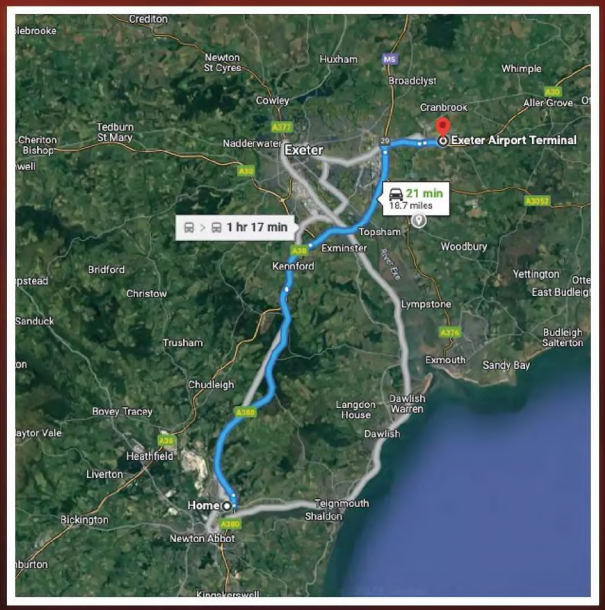
Step 5

With both starting point and destination completed, Google Maps will automatically generate your route. If you want to include additional stopping points to your journey, click on Add Destination and a third box will appear. Remove this box by clicking the X next to it.



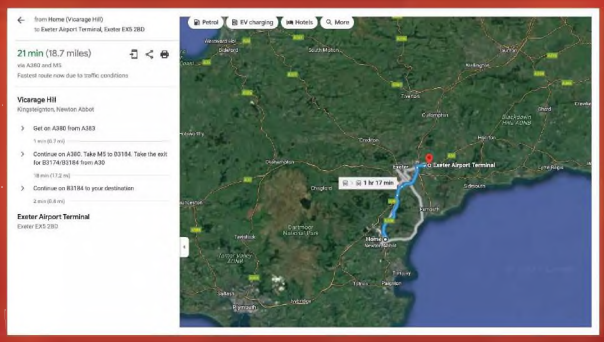
Step 6

Having generated your route, the map screen will zoom in to show the complete journey highlighted in blue. You can zoom in and out as normal if you want to get a closer look at the route. You can also alter the route by clicking on any part of it and dragging the blue line.



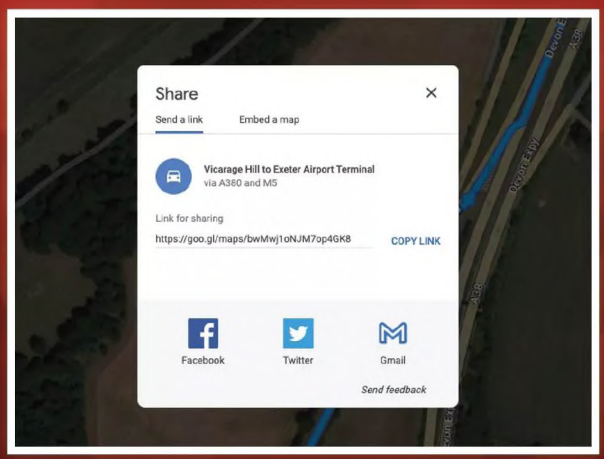
Step 7

The route is shown as a list of directions in the left-hand column which is accessed by clicking the Details icon. At the top of the list the distance and the estimated journey time is displayed. Roll your mouse over the list and you will see a marker displayed on the map at different junctions, roundabouts, etc.



Step 8

Scroll to the top of the directions list and you will see three icons, a link to save the route to My Maps. Share the details and you can also print directions directly by clicking the printer button. You can choose to show the map or just the directions on your printout.

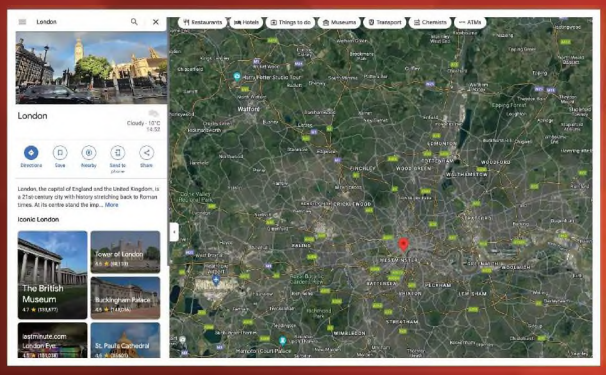


Using Google Street View

Street View is a feature of Google Maps that allows you to quickly and easily view and navigate high-resolution, 360-degree street level images of various cities around the world. With this guide you can learn the new ways to enter Street View.

Step 1

To start using Street View, open the Google Maps page by clicking on the Maps link on the Google Search home page. Type the name of the street, town or city you want to start viewing in the search box at the top of the screen.

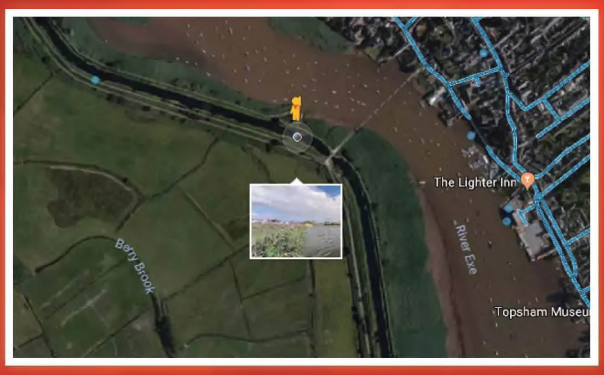


Step 2

When the map has zoomed in to show the area you searched for, click and drag the little yellow man from the bottom of the map zoom controls, onto the map. Blue lines will appear to show which streets and roads have been captured for Street View.

Step 3

Drop the yellow man icon onto any of these blue lines to see that road in Street View. As you hold the man over a marked location, Street View image will remain static, but if you slowly move it you will get additional Street View previews.



Step 4

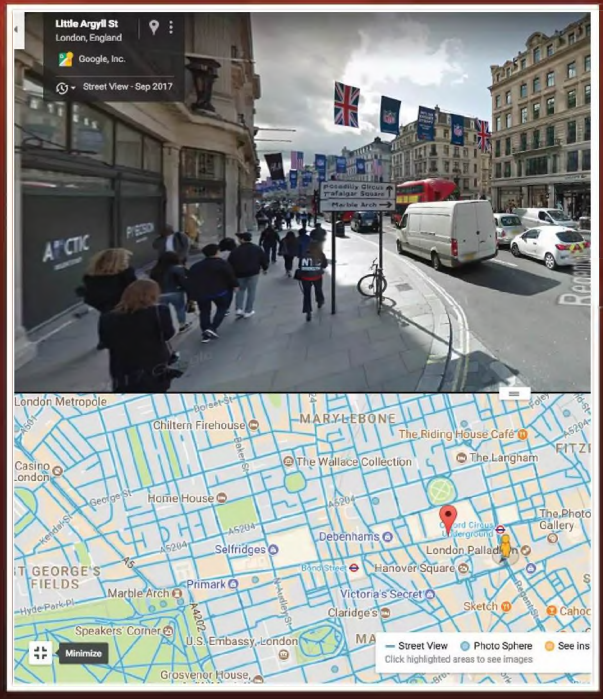
With Street View now showing, you can move around by moving the mouse pointer onto the road so that it becomes a circle and then clicking. The camera will pan forward to that position. Repeating this action lets you follow roads and streets along their length.

Step 5

Move the mouse pointer up onto the side of a building and it turns into a rectangle. Click the mouse and the camera will rotate to show the building centred on the screen. If, when you move the pointer onto a building, it shows a magnifying glass, you can zoom in to the image.

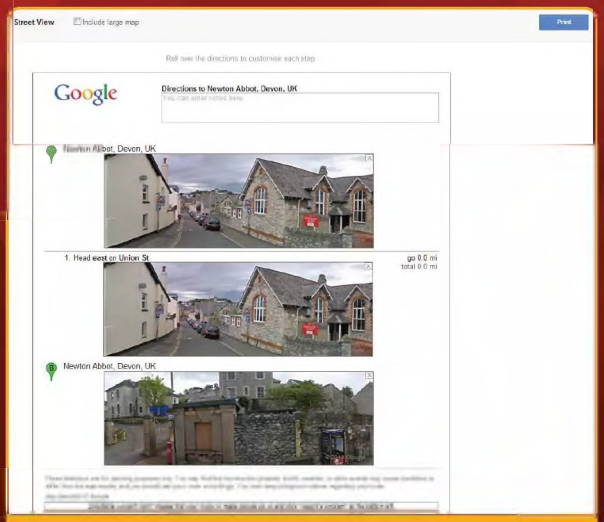
Step 6

In the corner of the Street View window is a small box showing your position on the map. You can expand or minimise it by clicking the icon to the bottom left. When you expand the map box, it will split the screen with Street View. You can also quick navigate your location by double tapping on the desired location.



Step 7

You can also use the mouse wheel to zoom in and out of the image in Street View. If you want to view the image in full screen, click in the button with four arrows in the top corner of the window. Click the X next to that to close Street View and return to the normal map view.



Route Plan with Street View

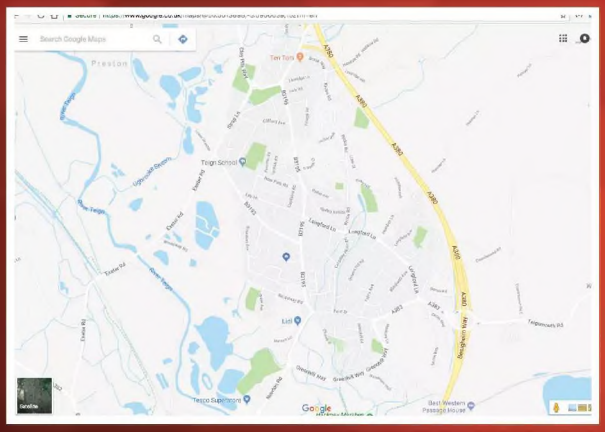
When using the route planner feature of Google Maps, it is possible to have the route displayed with a Street View image for each junction, roundabout or major change of direction. To activate this option, plan your route using the steps shown previously, click to print the route and then click the Street View link at the top of the Print screen.

Share and Embed Maps

Google Maps is a great tool when used on a phone or tablet for navigating and planning a route in advance. Not only can you use this great tool yourself, you can also share maps with others and even embed them on a website to give your customers directions.

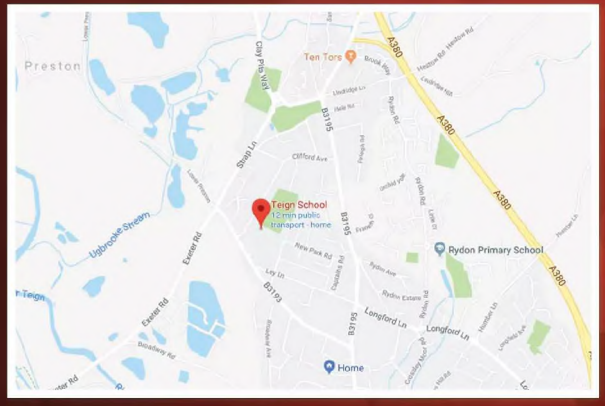
Step 1

Before you share a map, you need to zoom and scroll until the area you want to share is centred on the window. Only the visible portion is shared. You can also choose to share the map in Map view or Earth view.



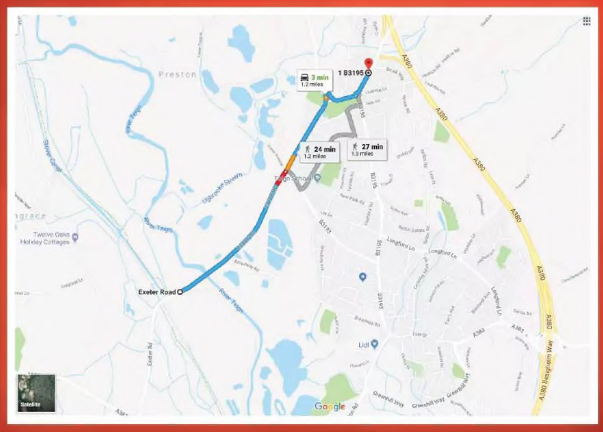
Step 2

If you have saved favourites on a map, only you will see them. Equally, if you embed the map and view it on your site, you see your saved places on the map. Your site's visitors won't see those saved places, they see a map built for them.



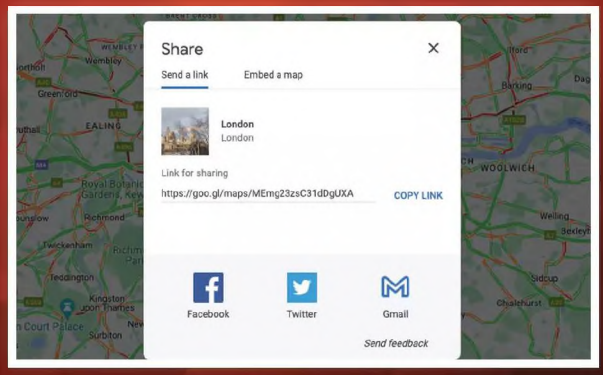
Step 3

Directions can be marked on the map, and will be shared when you send it. Right-click on two points on the map to set your direction to and from those locations. Check that the correct route is selected, if alternatives are available.



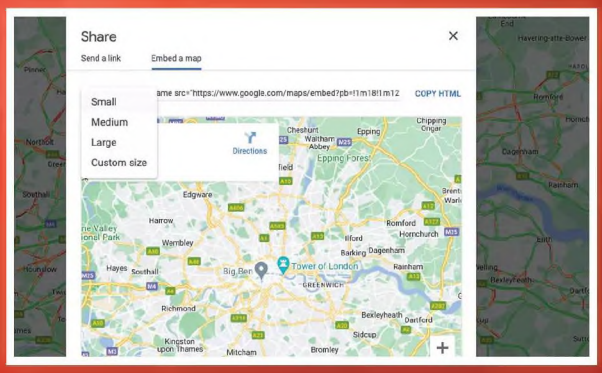
Step 4

In the top left corner of the screen, click the Menu icon. Select Share and embed map. Check the box next to Short URL to create a shorter link. Double-click the link to highlight it, then copy it by pressing Ctrl+c (or Cmd+c on Mac). Paste the link wherever you want to share the map, like an email or Google+ post.



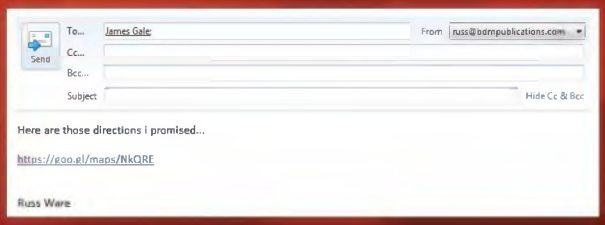
Step 5

❱ By using a short URL, you can squeeze a long Google Maps link into fewer characters to leave more room for other text. For example, the URL http://goo.gl/l6MS is easier to share than the long URL http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2009/12/making-urls-shorter-for-google-toolbar.html.



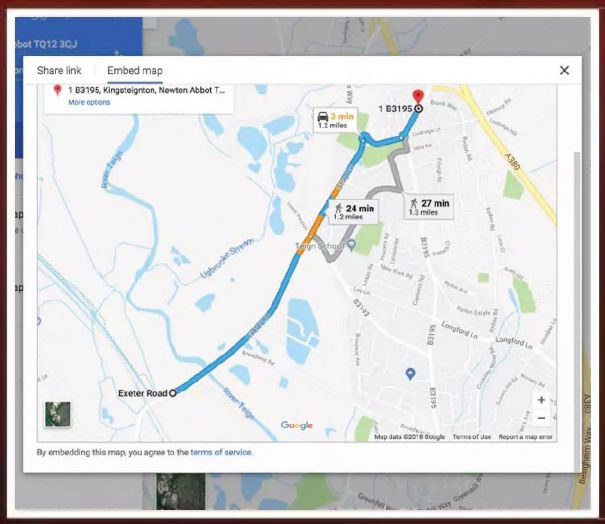
Step 6

❱ When the recipient opens the email, they can paste the link into their browser and see the map, with directions marked and listed in a step-by-step format. They will be able to interact with the map (choose an alternative route, etc.) just as if they created it.



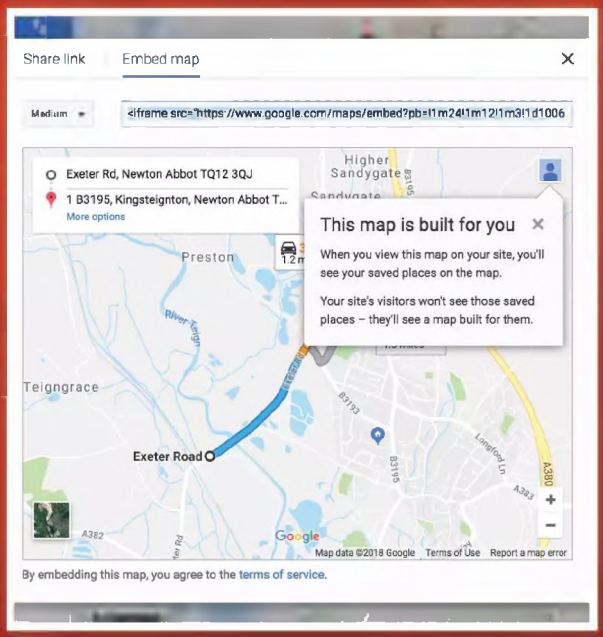
Step 7

❱ You can embed a basic map, driving directions or a local search into your website or blog from the new Google Maps. When your viewers are signed in to Google, they can also see their home and work, saved locations and more in your embedded map.



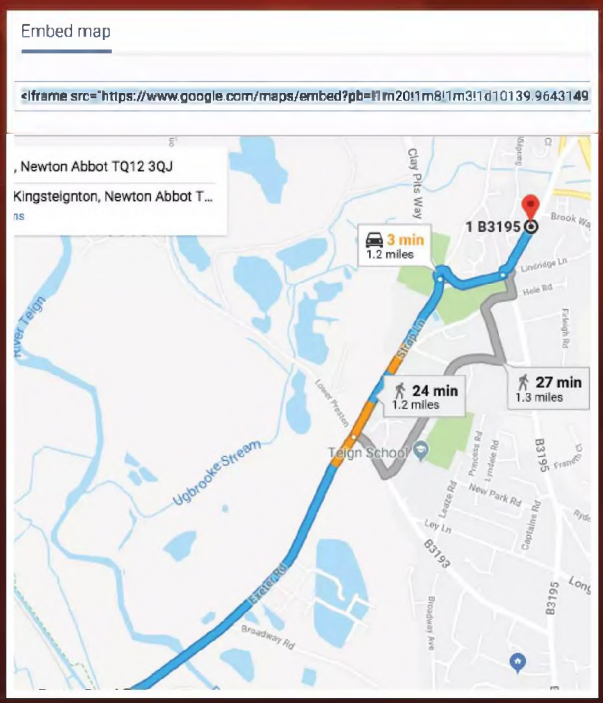
Step 8

❱ Ensure that the map you'd like to embed appears in the current map display. Click the settings gear icon in the bottom right. Click Share and embed map. In the box that appears, make sure the Embed map tab is selected.



Step 9

❱ Choose the embed size you want, then copy the HTML and paste the code into the source code of your website or blog. Keep in mind that traffic information and some other Maps features may not be available in the embedded map.

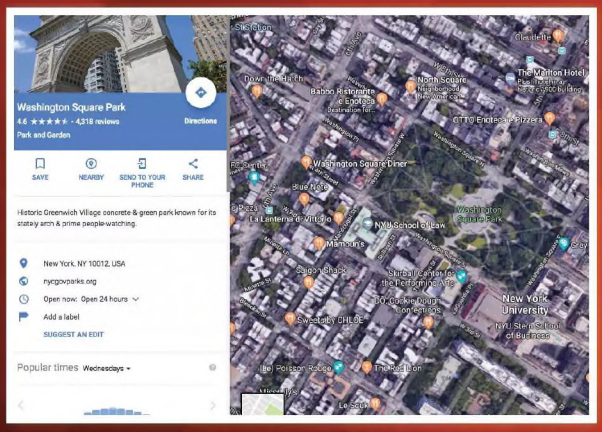


Explore Deeper with Maps

From adding more detail to maps to making it more intuitive to find local businesses, some updates may not be immediately noticeable. However, if you know where to look, a host of new features are there to be used. Here we take a look at using these extra options.

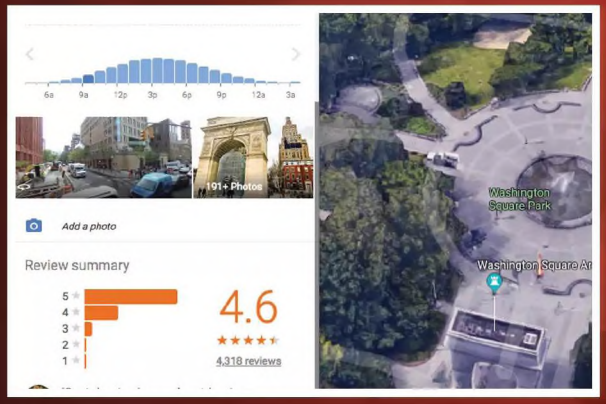
Step 1

Open Google Maps on your desktop. The map should be centred on the country you live in, even if you have not shared location information with Google. Photo tours can be found using the satellite imagery (Earth view).



Step 2

Having entered your search criteria, if photo tours of a location are available, they will be displayed as a series of photo thumbnail images on the pop up left side menu. These photos will show a side facing circular arrow icon in the bottom left.



Step 3

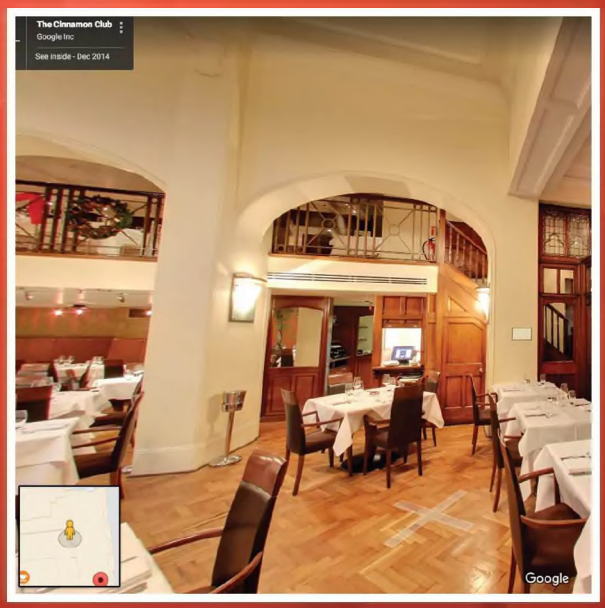
Photos, See inside and street views can also be displayed along the bottom of the map, by clicking the Yellow man icon. Photo Spheres are marked with a small blue circle, See Inside with an orange icon and street views with a circular arrow.

Step 4

Not all areas will feature photo points. They are made available when there are several different views of a particular area. Click on your choice of view and Google Maps will automatically swap to that location and view, here we have selected Photo Sphere.

Step 5

Photo Sphere and See Inside are interactive still photographs that have been uploaded to Google Maps. The latter allows you to do exactly as one would expect and give you a view inside the location, by simply clicking the small orange icon on the map. To exit to Maps click the back arrow top left.

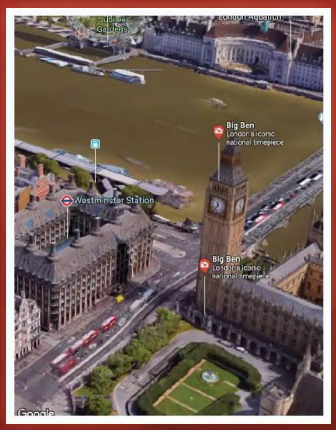


Step 6

If you choose instead to open a photo sphere, you can use your mouse to grab and drag the image around to see a 360 degree image of a location. Photo spheres are created using a smartphone app which, as mentioned, blends multiple photos together as one.

Step 7

Another fantastic feature of Maps is the 3D rendered view point you can access in key locations by clicking the 3D button on the main navigation controls, bottom right. By pressing and holding the Control key you can explore this 3D environment at your will.



Step 8

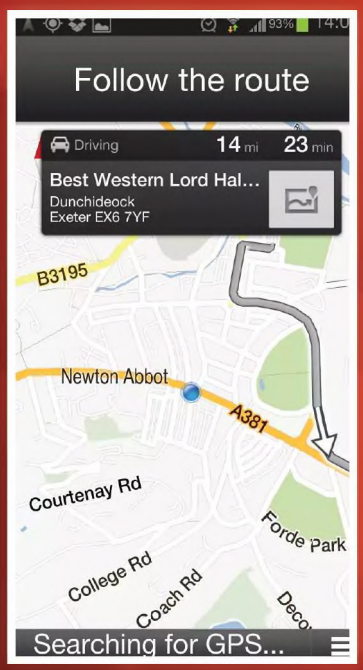
While in 3D mode, zoom into the screen and your viewpoint will change from the 3D rendered background to Street View automatically. This offers a perfect showcase of view points with a single gesture.

Google Maps Tips and Tricks

Google Maps and Google Earth are two of the most powerful and useful tools that Google has ever produced. If you have never done more than check out your house on Maps, here are a few tips and tricks that will help you to see the real possibilities of these tools.

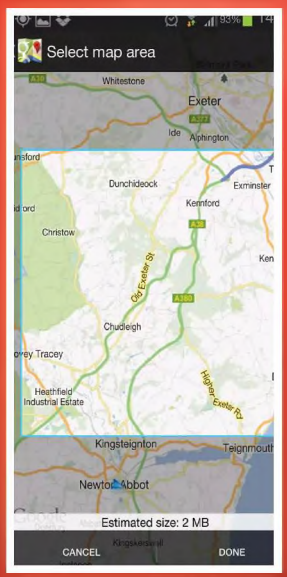
Turn-by-turn Navigation

If you own an Android smartphone, you won't need an extra GPS device for your cross country excursions. Map your road trip and get hands-free, turn-by-turn GPS navigation, complete with voice guidance. You can even get live traffic reports, letting you see current traffic conditions before you set off and while you're on the go. Get estimated travel times and even find alternative routes if things look busy.



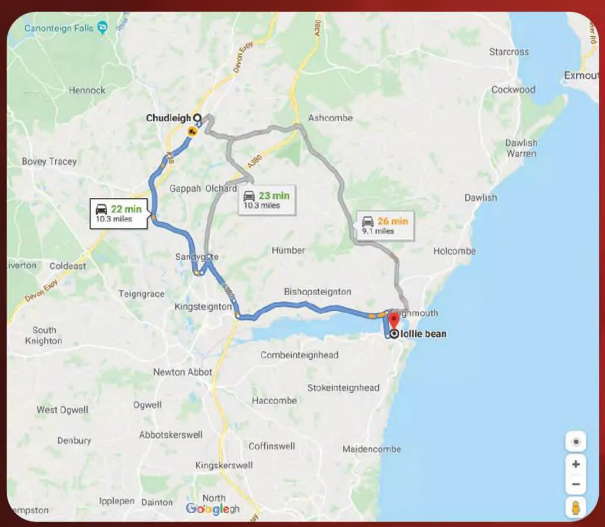
Offline Maps

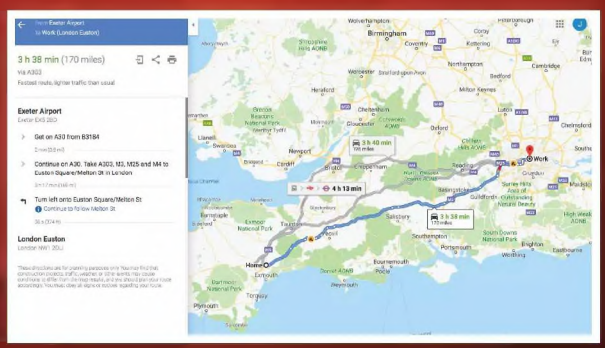
Get access to a map, with or without a network signal. Download a map of your destination to use offline and maintain GPS functionality even when you lose mobile service. You can save and use certain maps when you're not connected to the Internet. If your mobile device has GPS, the blue dot shows your location so you know where you are. You can even get maps of indoor spaces. The next time you're running through the airport or in a shopping centre, use Google Maps on your mobile phone to get indoor walking directions and find your way around.



Biking Maps

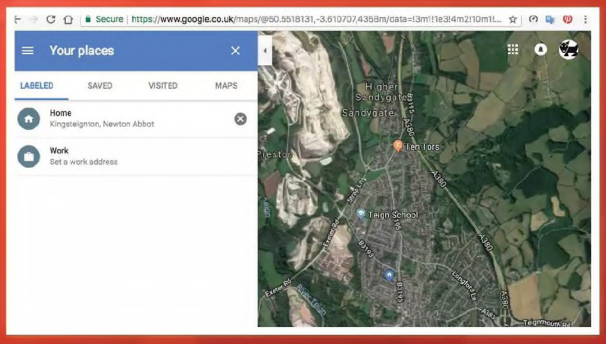
If you are more of a fan of pedal power than horsepower, you can use the Google Maps Biking Directions beta. Find dedicated bike trails, routes without motor vehicles and the best streets for cycling. Dark green lines indicate bike trails, light green shows dedicated bike lanes and dotted green lines are bicycle-friendly roads. Navigate it all with biking directions in Google Maps Navigation Beta.





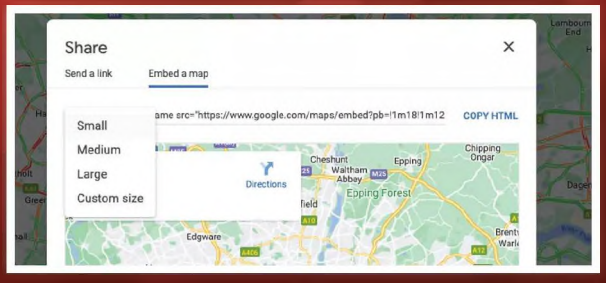
Your Places

Want to map out your travel plans or share hiking spots with friends? Try making your own map of what matters to you most with Your Places. Mark locations, add details like photos and links and invite others to collaborate with you on your map; and access it on your Android device. Sign in to your Google account to access your map across all your devices. You can take your map on the go to find your favourite spots easily and even access your desktop location search history on your phone, and vice versa.



Sharing Maps

You can share maps via a short URL, an HTML embed, email, text message and even send maps to certain GPS units and cars. To generate a customisable embed code or URL, click on the link icon to the top left of your display. Check the Short URL box (or whatever you require) or click the link for Customise and Preview Embedded Map. If you want to send the link out, rather than copy/paste the text that's been generated, click Send for further options.

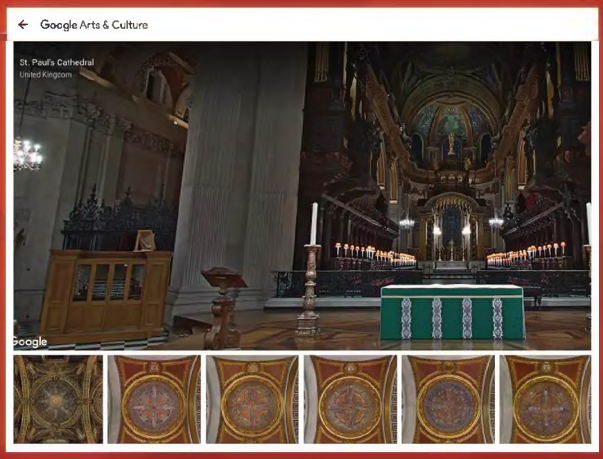


MapsGL

MapsGL uses technology called WebGL (Web-based Graphics Library) to enhance the Google Maps experience. WebGL brings 3D graphics to your browser without the need to install additional software. This allows you to provide seamless transitions between various levels of imagery and different map views. Some of the MapsGL improvements include 3D buildings in Map view mode and 45° aerial imagery, smooth transitions between zoom levels and seamless 45° aerial view rotations and the ability to Swoop quickly from the Map View to Street View imagery. With MapsGL, you can experience all of this in your browser without a plug-in.

Google Arts & Culture

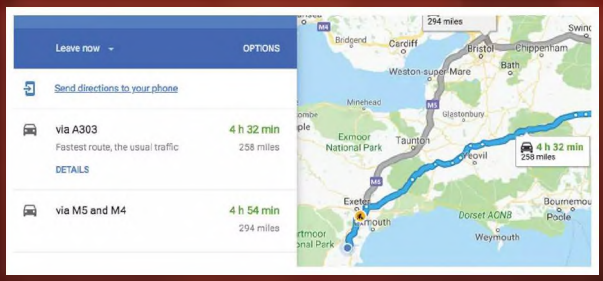
Google Arts & Culture is a platform which brings world heritage sites of the modern and ancient world online. Using Street View, 3D modelling and other Google technologies, these amazing sites are now accessible to everyone across the globe. With videos, photos and in-depth information, you can now explore the wonders of the world from your armchair just as if you were there. A fantastic feature that makes Street View even more unmissable.



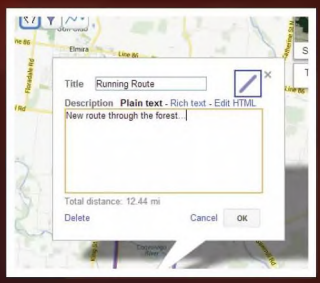
Send to Phone

Google Send to Phone enables you to send text messages of Google Maps content to your mobile phone. For example, you might text yourself an address or location you've found.

To send something you've found on Google Maps to your phone, click the link icon in the left panel. Click Send and choose Phone from the left side. Enter the required information and hit Send. You'll receive a text message with your selection. You can also send a local search result to your phone, by clicking More > Send from the place marker's location information window.



My Places



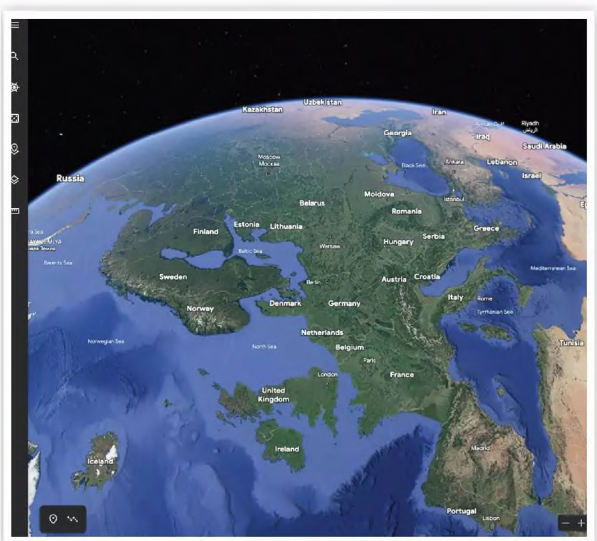
Using My Places, you can create custom, annotated Google Maps that include place marks, lines a nd shapes. You can even add descriptive text and embed photos and videos in your map; then share your maps with others. This can be handy for mapping out your favourite restaurants, planning an upcoming holiday or saving biking routes for future reference.

Explore with Google Earth

Google Earth lets you explore the world from the comfort of your own home. Featuring high quality satellite imagery, as well as incredible 3D rendered models, Google Earth lets you take a trip to a faraway place, stroll through a 3D forest and even travel back in time.

Step 1

If you have not already installed the Google Earth app on your smartphone or tablet device, you will need to do this before you can begin. Alternatively you can use it from the Google Earth webpage, click on the Learn more link in the bottom left corner of the screen and click on the Earth Pro link to start.

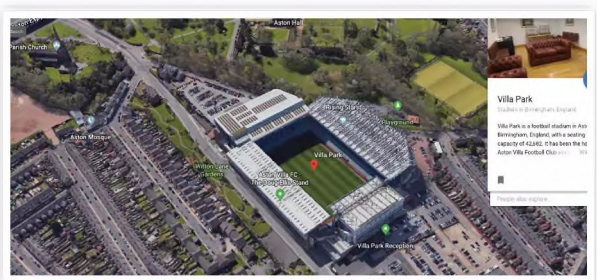


Step 2

Click on the links to install the app. When installation is complete, you will need to refresh the page to load the Earth view. You should notice that the view changes to show detail that is more realistic. You can now zoom right out into space.

Step 3

You can search for locations in Google Earth by clicking the Search icon in the side bar to the left of the screen. Type the name of a street, town or country in the search box and the view will zoom in to show it. Search also for landmarks and businesses.

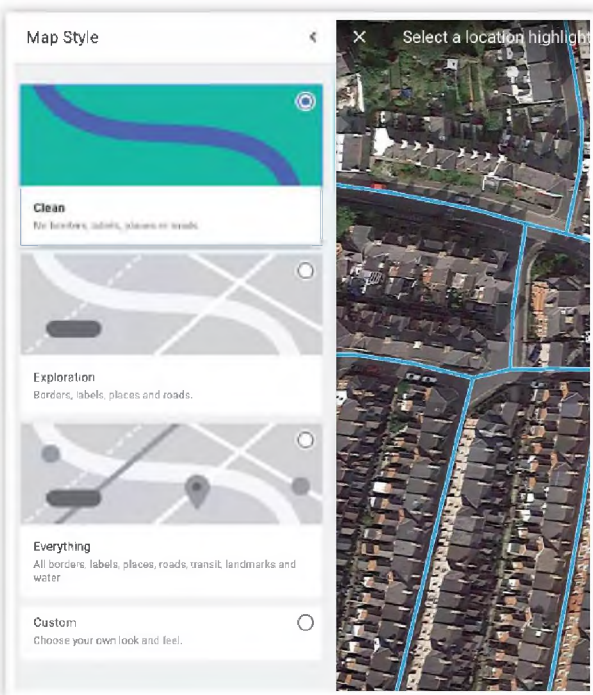


Step 4

The view of many locations in Google Earth will be in 3D. To tilt the camera, use the controls at the top left of the window: the control with the eye tilts the camera, the control with the hand pans the camera. You can pan, zoom and tilt by right-clicking on a point and moving the mouse.

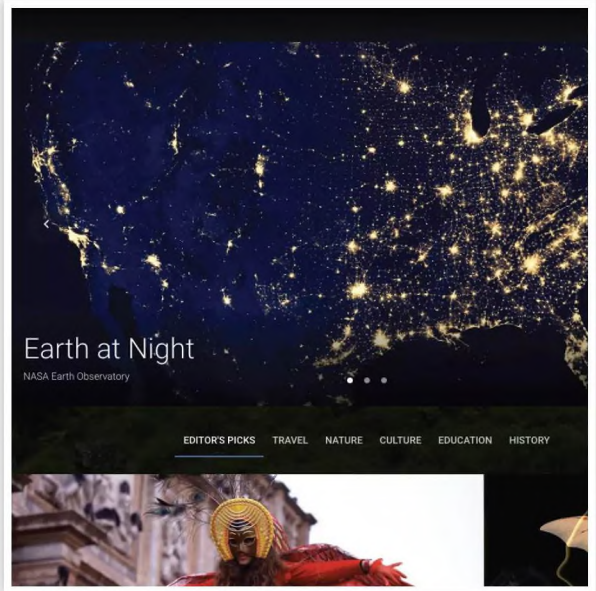
Step 5

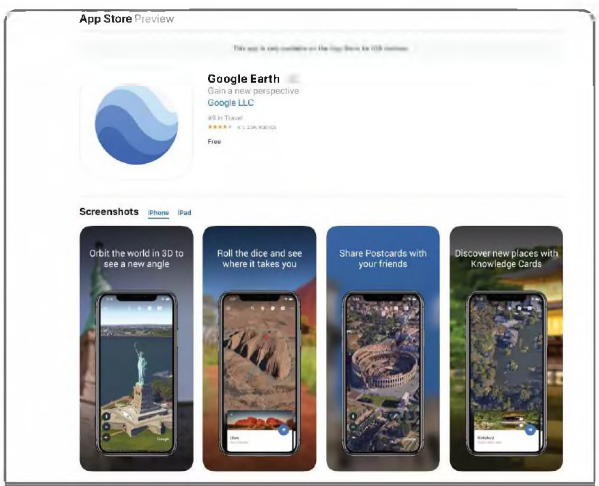
Switch to view while using Google Earth by clicking the Menu options, top right, and then selecting Map Style. Now you can pick how the Map details are shown. From limited information to in-depth detail or an option between the two.



Step 6

You can access news, photos, videos and Wikipedia information via Google Earth. Click on the ship's wheel icon on the left side bar to switch to the Voyager screen. You can then click on individual piece to read it in full. This information is updated regularly so remember to check back.





Google Earth Mobile

In addition to the desktop app described above, you can also download and install the standalone mobile version of the app. The desktop version lets you view satellite imagery, maps, terrain, 3D buildings, galaxies far away in space and the deepest depths of the ocean. You can learn about the moon and follow Apollo missions; take narrated tours about the effects of climate change and even travel back in time with Historical Imagery. The Google Earth app is available for your Android or Apple devices.

How to Use Google Translate

With the Earth in the palm of your hand or at the end of your keyboard, there are no limits to how far you can explore without barriers. Yet if you have been inspired to open up your world on the other side of your screen, there is one barrier that could limit your travels, that of language.

Setting Up Translate

Google Translate is far more than just a basic translate tool. You can use this in several different ways.

Step 1

Unlike Google Earth or Maps, the Translate app is far less graphically intense but its lack of visual gloss is replaced with a very powerful tool that can prove as essential, so let's take a look. Open the Apps menu on the tool bar and select Translate from the choice of applications.

Step 2

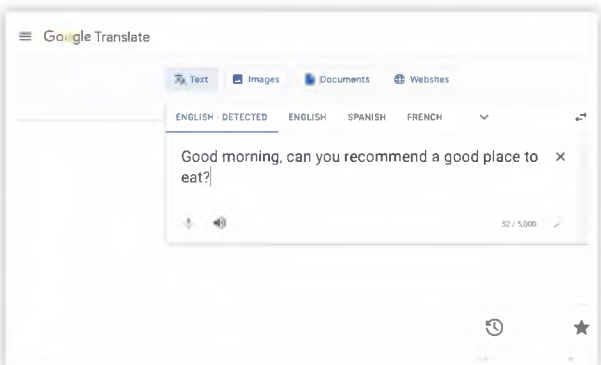
This is the main control window of Google Translate, from here you can decipher any communication break downs. Notice the two boxes on screen. The left (input) is where you enter the original text and the right (output) is where it is translated.

Google Lens Translate

Using the Google Lens feature on your smartphone's camera you can instantly translate text. You do this by selecting the "Translate" option from those displayed at the bottom of the screen and simply holding your camera at the text you wish to translate and tapping Capture. The image will now display in your default language.

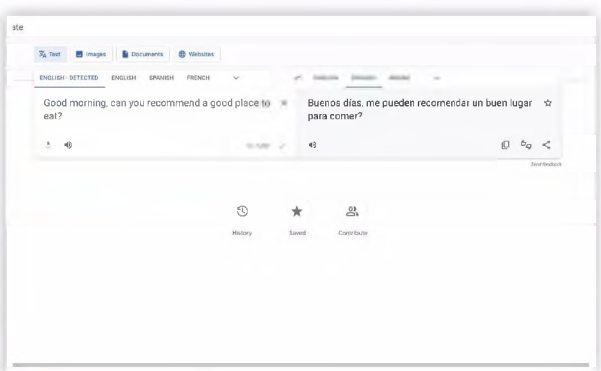
Step 3

Just like a standard Google search you can choose to input your text via the keyboard or using voice input. To use the latter, click on the Microphone icon to the left or if you prefer the former, tap the keyboard icon to the right. Your text will now appear in the box to the left. By clicking the double arrow icon between these boxes, you can swap the text.



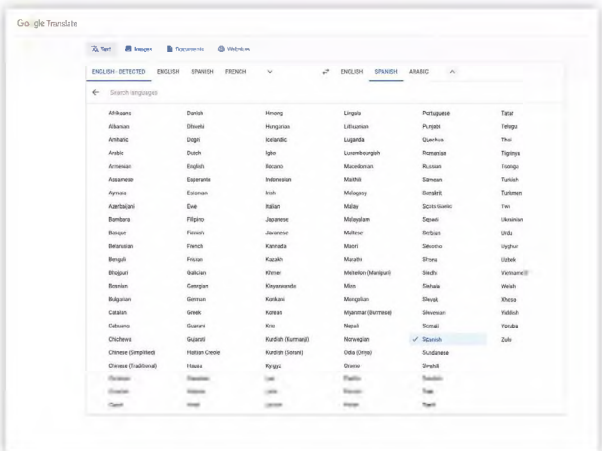
Step 4

NOTE: You are limited 5000 characters per translation so ensure you enter your text in small chunks to avoid missing text. For this first example we have entered an expression in English and selected Norwegian, from the drop down menu, as the translated language. The translation happens in real time.



Step 5

If you wish to translate the same piece of text into another language, click on the downward arrow icon and select your language for the list of options. You can also hear both the original and the translated expression by clicking the speaker icon in the bottom left of the input or output windows.

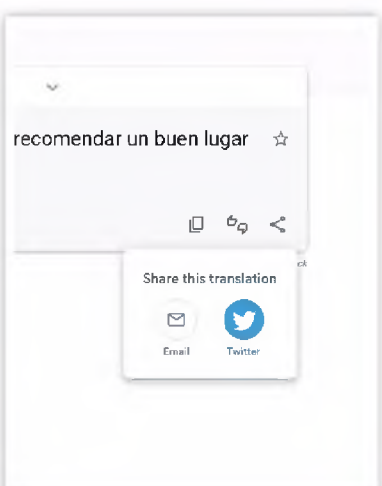


Step 6

You can also use Google Translate for images, documents and websites. Simply select from the above and follow the instructions. For this example let's look at translating a website from English into Spanish. Click website from the links, enter the URL and hit the Blue arrow, it will load in a pop-in in Spanish.

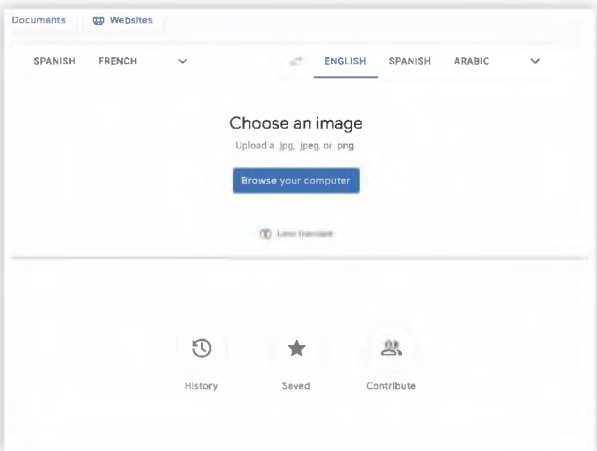
Step 7

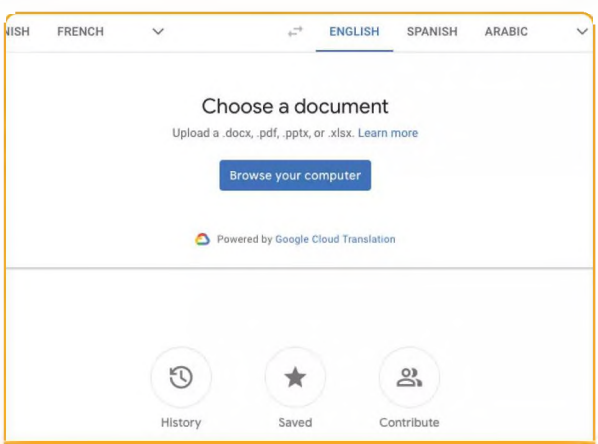
Translated text can be Copied, Shared or Saved to Phrasebook, the results using the icon links in the output box. By clicking the Star icon to the top right you can open your Phrasebook and quickly view all your saved translations. You can also save the file by clicking Export to Google Sheets.



Step 8

To translate complete documents and text on images via Google Translate, the process is similar for both formats. Click either Documents or Images from the top bar and then locate the file on your device. Then click on Download Translation to output the translated file to device.





Translate Documents

To translate a piece of text that is larger than 5000 characters you can upload a full document which will be read and translated by the Translate app. Once the process is complete you are free to download the translated document. This process is far from complex as we will detail below.

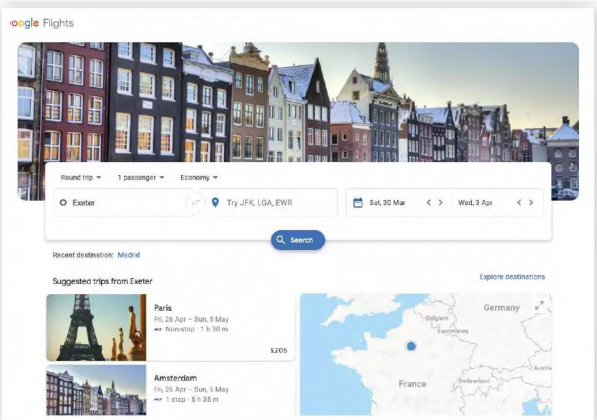
From the "translate a document" link below the text input box, click on blue text to bring up a small grey box with a Choose file link on the left side. Click this link and locate the file you wish to translate and select as is usual with your OS. You can upload files from a number of formats from Word to HTML files, there is a 1MB file size limit so ensure your doc is compatible. Once your file is uploaded tap the blue Translate icon to load your translated document, leaving you to copy and paste the results as you wish.

How to Use Google Flights

Google have apps for navigating the world around you, and Google Flights is the next logical addition to their app portfolio, giving you quick access to explore the world for real. With this app you can find and book flights for you and your family, making the world more accessible.

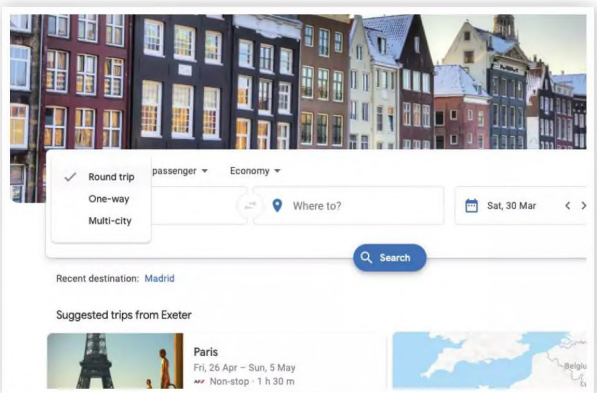
Step 1

Navigate to the Google Flights website google.com/flights to be presented with this home page. It is advised that you allow Google to track your location so you will be automatically linked to your nearest airport, based on distance.



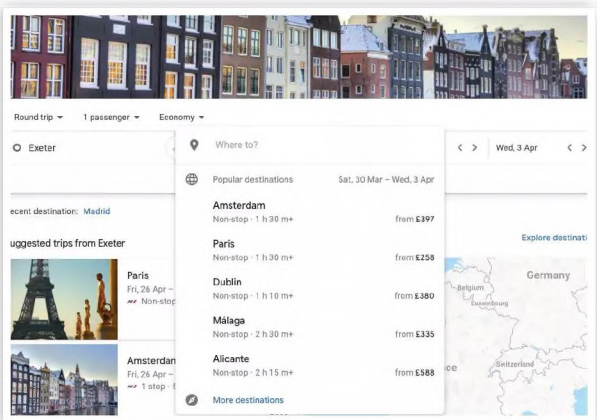
Step 2

Just above the main search bar, you will notice you have three options which are very important to ensure your search results match your requirements. Your options are type of trip, number of passengers and finally type of seat. Enter your picks.



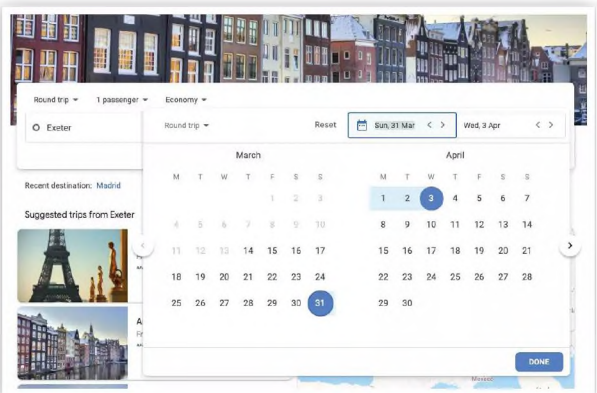
Step 3

In the search bar, first enter the airport you wish to fly from and the destination you wish to travel to. NOTE: if this location doesn't fly to your choice of destination the nearest airport that does, will be selected for you. Next select a travel date.



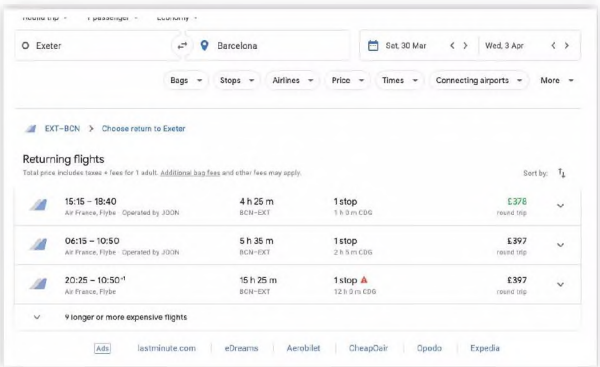
Step 4

Having selected the airport and your destination you can now confirm that your flights are available for the time period you wish to fly. To do this simply enter the departure and return dates to see a listing of all available flights within this time scale.



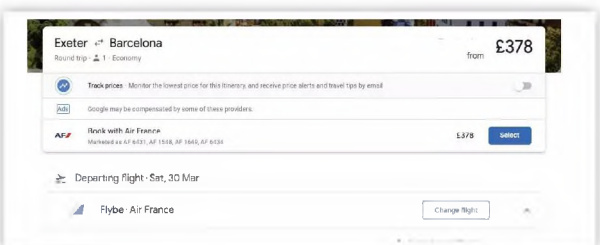
Step 5

Click the flight that suits your needs to be taken to this window, from here you can view any stop overs or changes required by clicking the small arrow icon to the right of the top bar. If you have happy to move on click anywhere on the listing.



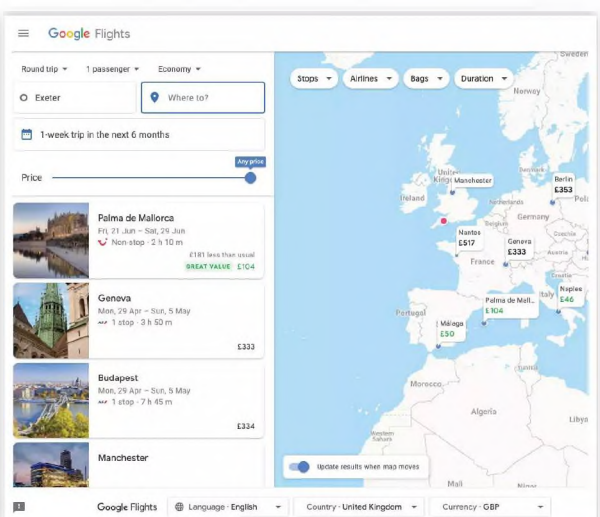
Step 6

This screen is where you actually book the flight and confirm the listed details. When you are happy to proceed, click the Select icon and you will be automatically taken to the airline or ticket vendors' website, where you can complete your booking.



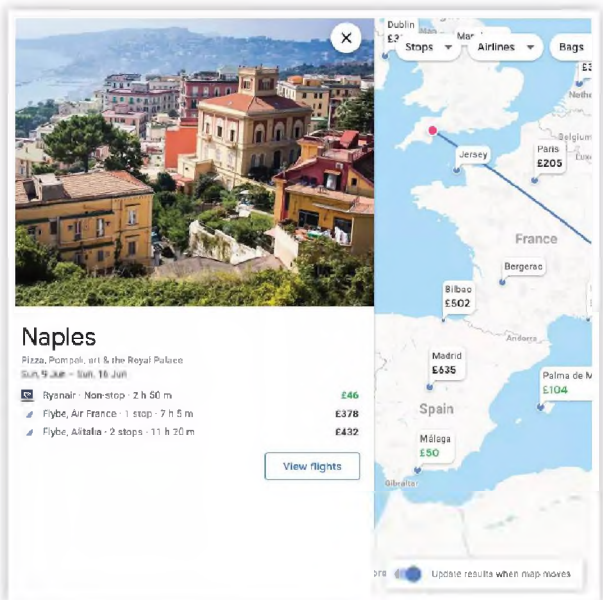
Step 7

If you are more open with your travel plans, and don't have a strict destination you wish to visit you are well covered by this app. From the home page click the Explore Destinations link directly above the world map bottom right.



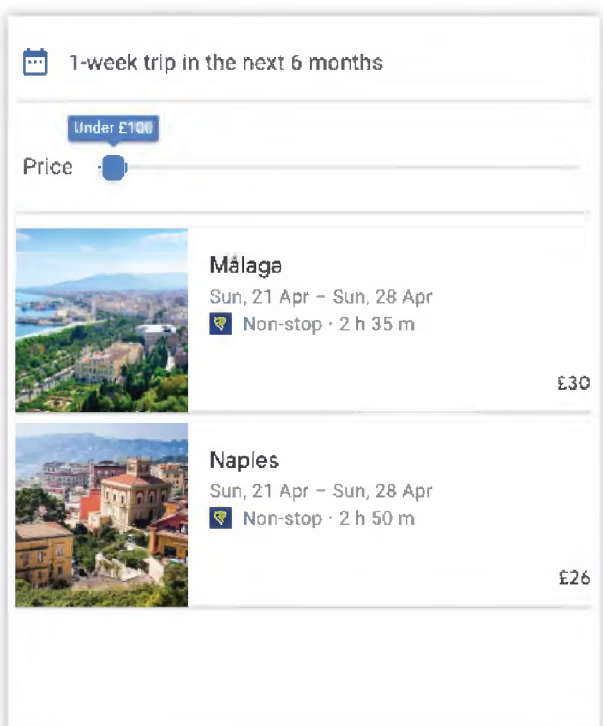
Step 8

From the map screen you will see a selection of locations and flight prices that are available from your choice of airport. Click on any of these to be shown the flight plan, a visual and a brief selection of alternative flights and their costs.



Step 9

You can also choose to change the search parameters based on the price of the flight. You can do this by using the slide bar on the left of the screen and selecting the price you wish to pay. The results are displayed below.



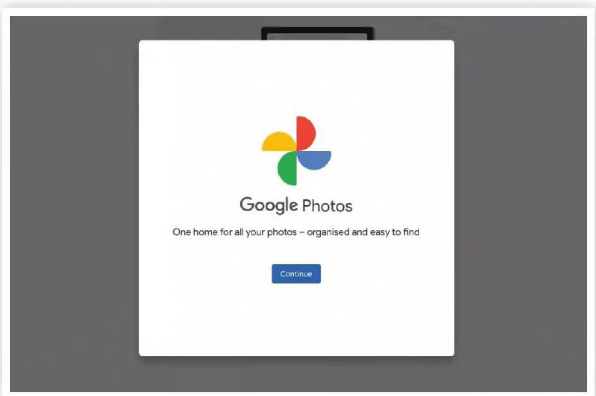
Getting Started with Photos

If you have never used Photos before, you may be surprised to discover just how useful this free tool is. It not only lets you create slideshows of your favourite images and share images with your friends and family, it also allows you to edit your images. By making Photos the central hub for your photography those memories will be safe.

Uploading to Photos

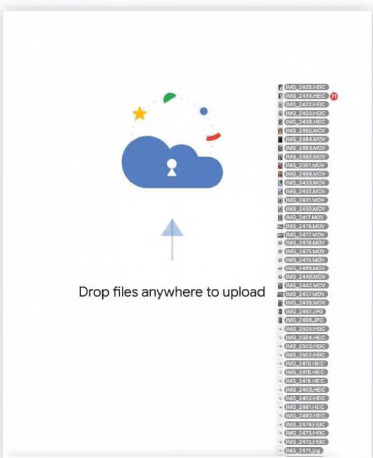
Step 1

Open the Photos app via the App icon and the drop down menu accessed from it. The first thing you will need to do with Photos is upload your images and videos into it. Unlike its predecessor Google's Picasa, Photos doesn't search your computer for files thus you will need to organise yours first.



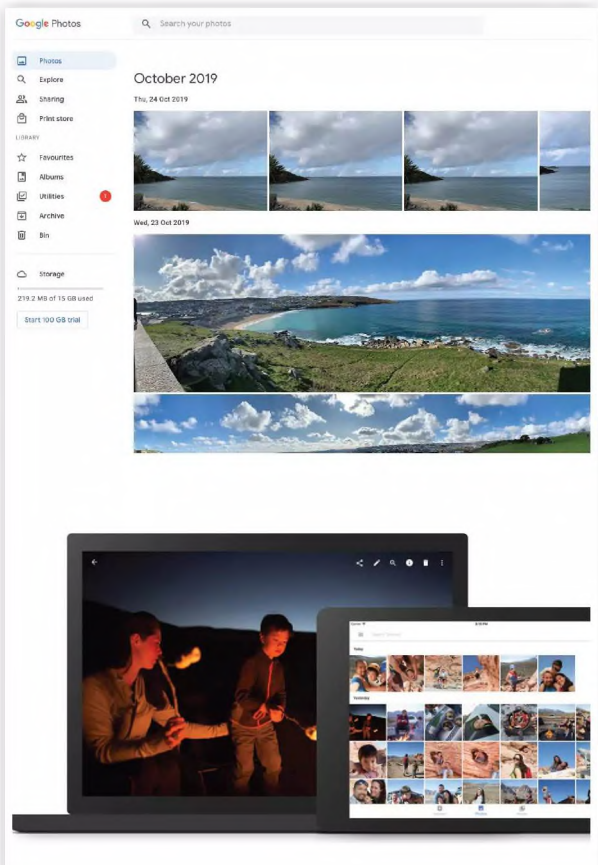
Step 2

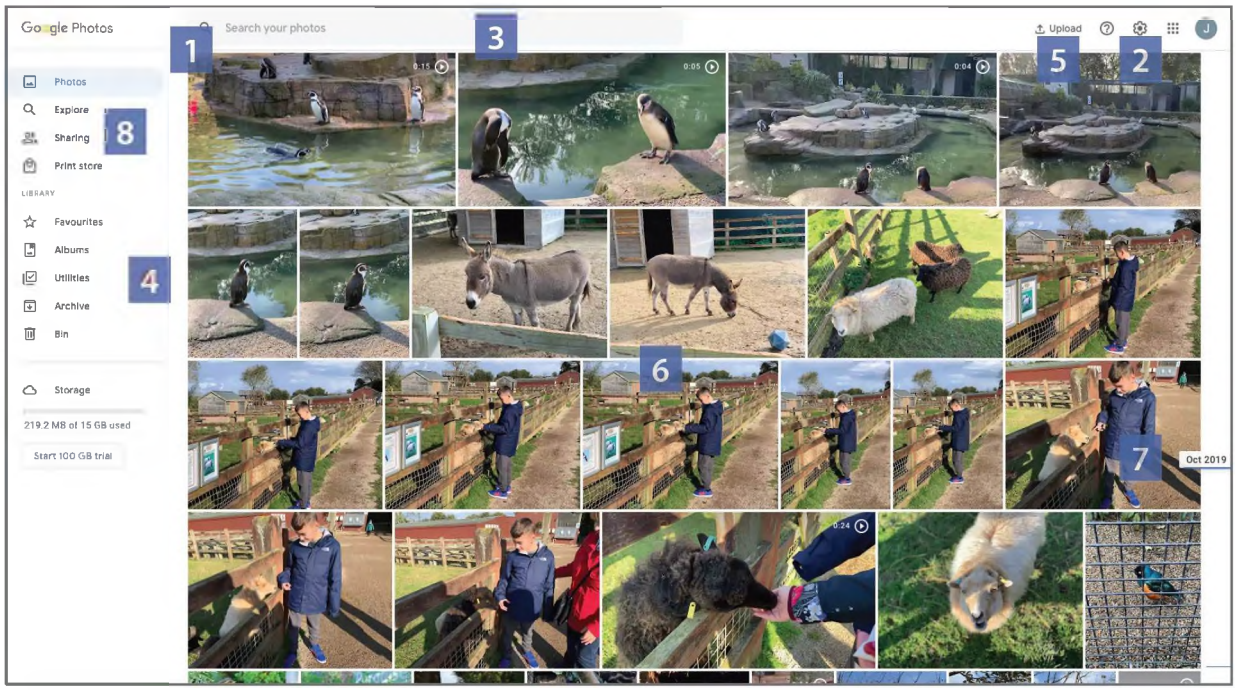
Having placed the files you wish to upload to Photos in a folder, the quickest way to transfer them is to simply drag and drop the files on the Photos window as a group. You can choose to resize them from their original size to Storage saver, with a reduction in quality.



Step 3

When your files have uploaded to Photos, they will be displayed based upon the date the images or videos were captured, newest to oldest being the default setting. Notice the link to the Desktop Uploader, ignore that for now as we will cover it later.





Using Photos

Below we break down the key features and controls of the Google Photos application, so it's even easier to use.

1 Menu

This is the main Photos menu panel, giving you control of the core uses of the app. Here you can quickly access the key functionality of the application, from sharing your images and videos to clearing out unwanted files.

2 Settings

The Settings link gives you access to Photos customisable features. From this link you can decide upon your storage options, compressed but high quality storage is free, while keeping your files at the original size is limited to 15GB for free.

3 Search

By entering the title of your file you can search your image and video database for it. If you have a large amount of files stored in Photos, you can narrow the criteria of your search to specific files from Videos to 360 photos by double clicking on search.

4 Ultities

Tap this link to open a pop-up menu which contains four additional links, Album, Shared album, Animation and Collage. By click on your choice from these four options you will be taken directly to its specific window.

5 Upload

By tapping this link you will open an upload window, where you can search your computer for any additional photographs or videos that you wish to add to your Photos file collection. Once you have located the files, select them and click Open.

6 Timeline

Here you can control the images and videos that are displayed in the main Preview window based upon the date they were originally captured. To do this simply scroll up or down through the Timeline bar, stopping at the date you wish to view.

7 Preview Window

By default, all images, animations, collages and videos will be displayed in this main window. You can scroll through your collection and by clicking on a file you can view it full screen and add it to your Pinterest account by tapping the icon top left.

8 Sharing

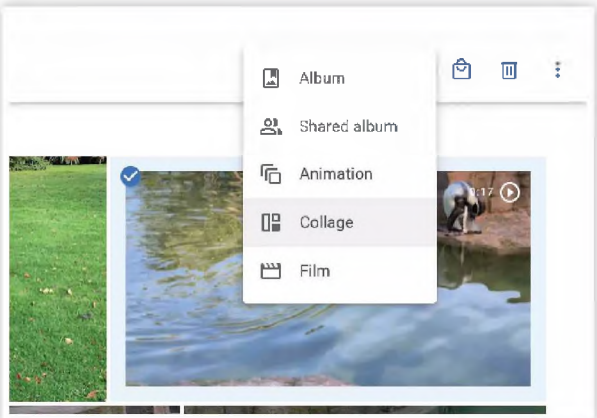
This option is a far more in-depth way of sharing your entire library of files with another user via an email account, for example a family member or friend. You can, however, only share your library with one person.

Using Photo Collages and Animations

One of the great features included with Photos is the ability to make collages and animations of your files, either for yourself or to be shared with your friends and family.

Step 1

Starting with a collage, the first task is to select your photos. You can select a single folder by clicking on it in the folder panel or you can select numerous images by clicking on the tick icon on the top left corner of each of the images you want.

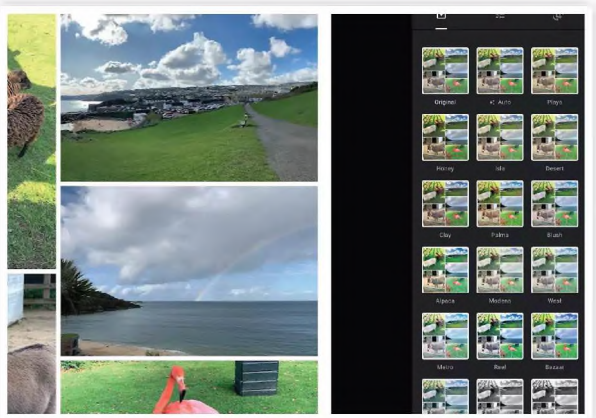


Step 2

Once all the images you want are selected, click the + icon located in the top right of the preview window. A new menu will open; from the options you are given, select Collage. Photos will now auto generate a collage based on your images.

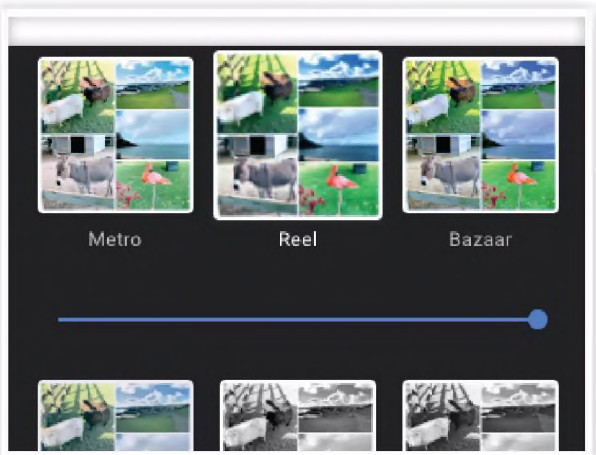
Step 3

You can edit your image collage by tapping the edit icon located to the top right of this screen. You have a series of options and filters that you can apply to your new image. To use a filter click the Edit icon (Top left) and then click on the style.



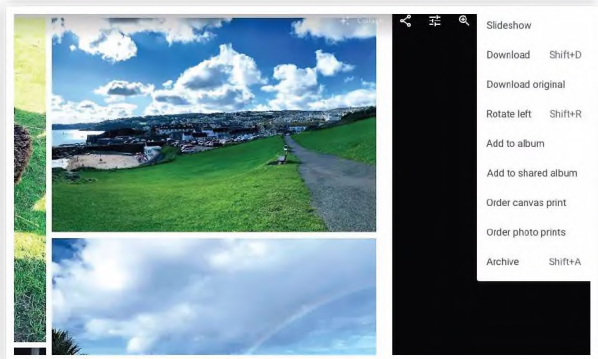
Step 4

You can also adjust the level of filter use using the slider bar in the middle of the filters listings. The crop and rotate tool enables you to cut out sections of the collage or rotate the image at either 90 degree angles or manually.



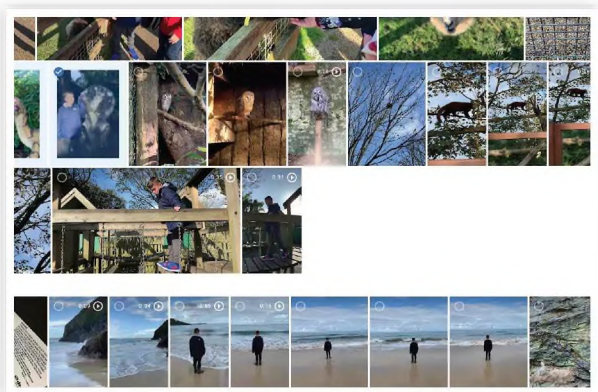
Step 5

When you are happy with the edits to your collage, tap the Done icon. You have a couple of options for saving it. Click the more options link on the far right corner of the window. Now choose how you wish to store your new collage from this list.



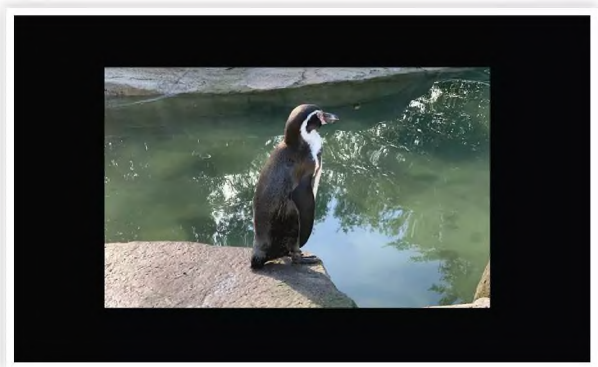
Step 6

Moving on to the Animation option, once again select the images you wish to add and click the + icon and select Animation for your list of options. Now all your have to do is leave the Photos application to do the work for you.



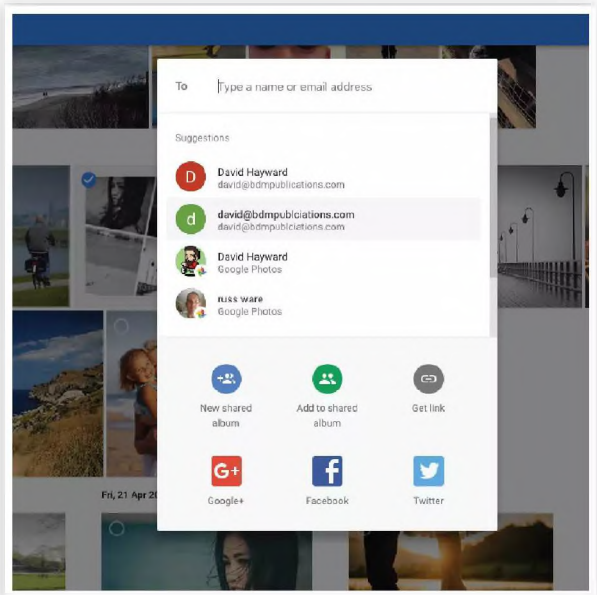
Step 7

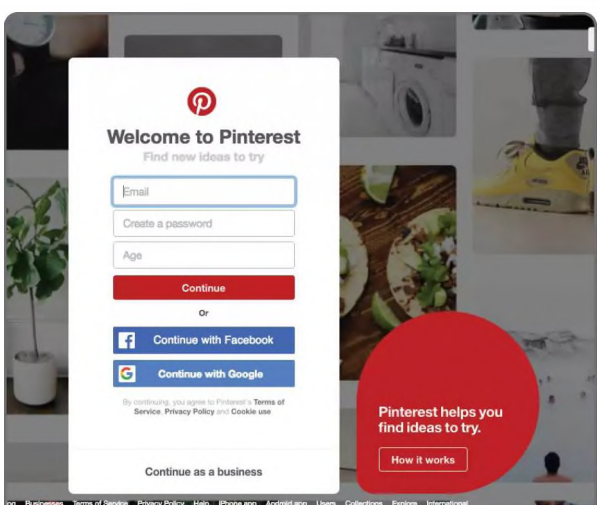
Photos will now auto generate an Animation based on your images. This animation is simply a slideshow, moving between a series of still images. This animation is automatically saved to your collection of files within Photos.



Step 8

When you are happy with your collage and or your animated slide-show you can send them to your contacts by tapping the Share icon. When you see this window, choose how you wish to share the file and click the required icon to make your selection.





Link to Pinterest

Pinterest is a very popular social networking tool, based around sharing images, which is closely linked to the Photos application.

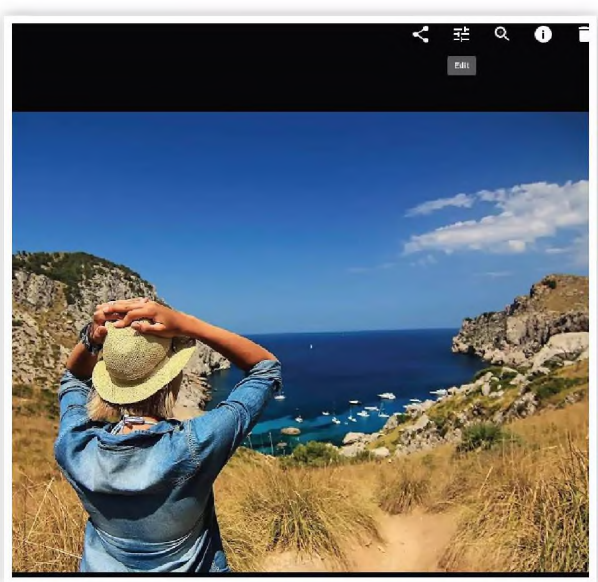
If you are already a Pinterest user or simply wish to sign up and share your photos with the world, it couldn't be easier to get started. Visit www.pinterest.com and sign in using your Google account. Once you are signed in you can upload directly by clicking the icon on any of your images, when you are viewing them full screen.

Editing Images Using Photos

Google Photos not only provides you with storage for your photos and videos in one place, it can also be used to edit your picture. Photos editor is not a fully-featured image editing program but it includes enough to make the most of your photos. It's also free!

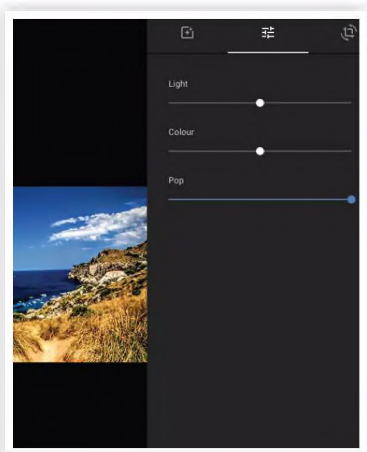
Quick Fixes

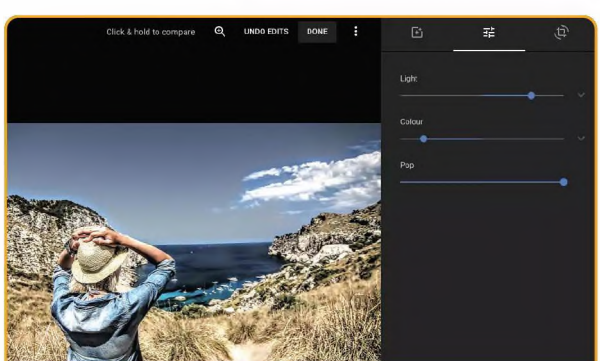
As stated Google Photo editing isn't a fully optimised and functional Photoshop alternative but with that said, there are more than enough options for you to clean up or enhance your digital photography, with only the most basic understanding of photo-editing. Photos offers simple tools, designed to help fix common problems with a few clicks as follows.



Light and Colour Fixes

These controls let you change the lighting or colour levels of your image. You can either use the sliders to change Light, Colour temperature and Pop. The latter being a fantastic tool that adds greater depth to your images with a simple adjustment to the slider.



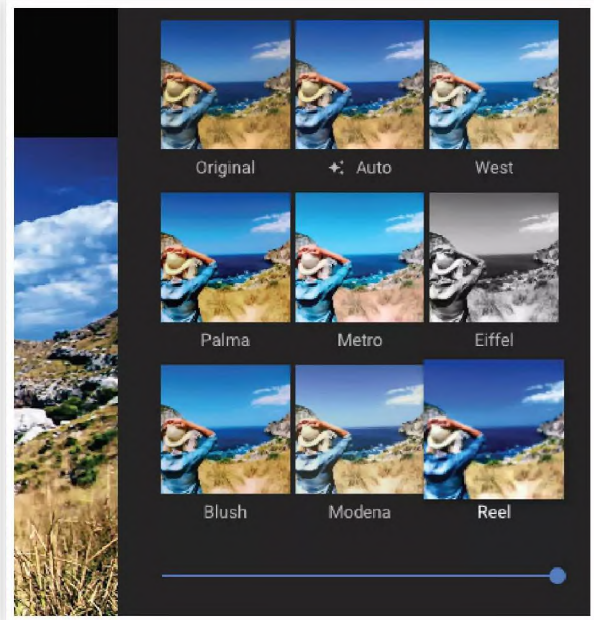


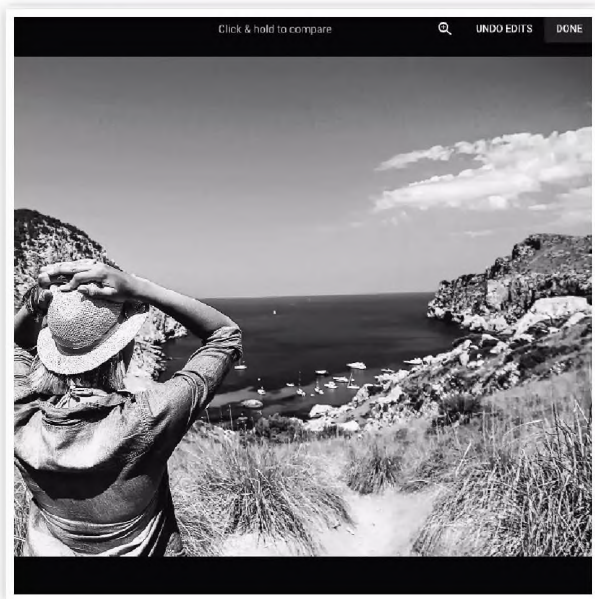
Undo Edits

You can easily remove any edits you have made to your photographs while you are still editing. All you need to do to remove your edits is click on the Undo Edits button located at the top of the editing window. By doing this you will instantly remove any changes you have made to the image, from applying filters to cropping and rotating, so make sure you are happy to do so before clicking. You can copy your edits via the edit menu (three dots) and paste them on any image in your library.

Image Processing (Filters)

These controls let you quickly add a range of different filters to your images. These range from sepia and black and white, to soft focus and graduated tint. Click on each filter and you can then control the intensity of the effect using sliders. You can easily undo any effect using the buttons below the filter list.





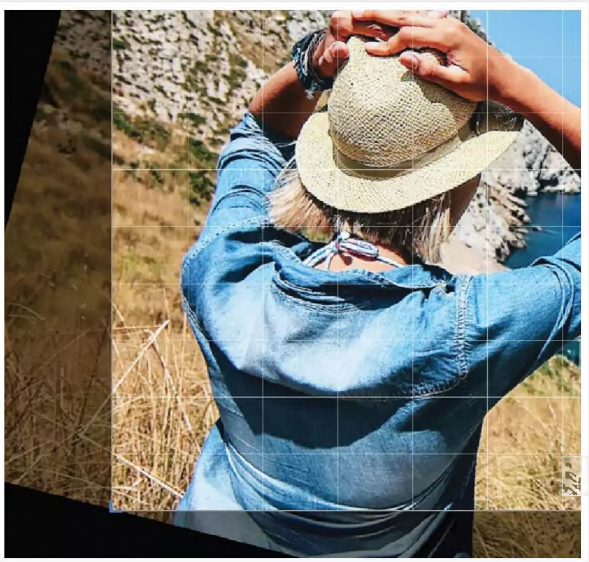
Click and Hold to Compare

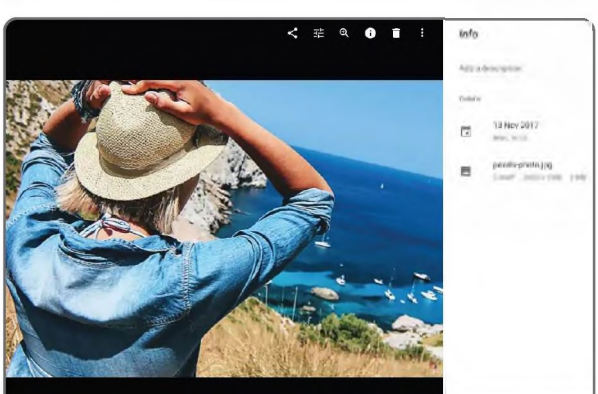
When editing or applying filters to your images, it is very important that you don't lose sight of the original image; this ensures that your edits aren't actually detrimental. At anytime during the editing process, you can revert to your original image by pressing and holding on the mouse button or screen. Your altered image can be saved as a copy.

Rotate and Crop

The crop and rotate tool enables you to cut out sections of the collage or rotate the image at either 90 degree angles or manually using the user controls down the right hand side. NOTE: If you are using the crop tool to zoom this could effect image quality.

You can also crop the image to a number of specific aspect ratios, Free (user defined as detailed above), Original, Square, 16:9, 4:3 and 3:2 by clicking the aspect ratio icon in the top bar. Having selected any of these ratio options, Photos will place an adjustable frame on the image, click Done when you are ready to crop the image.





Adding Information

Each photo or movie file in your Photos library contains unique information. This includes file size, resolution, date and time it was captured all as default. This data can be viewed by clicking on the "i" icon on the control bar at the top of the window. You can add a custom description to your files, which will be stored as part of the image's information. To save this new info tap the X Icon in the top right corner of the screen.

Using Your Photo Albums

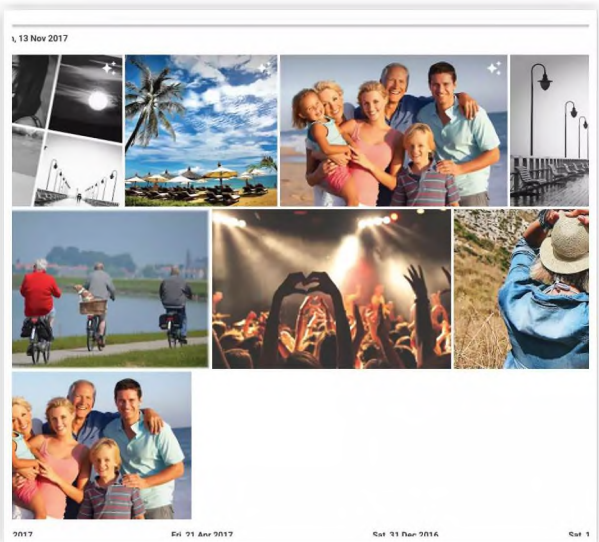
Google Photos Albums is an easy way to store your photos online and then share them as and when you choose. Google provides free storage that makes sharing your photos quick and easy.

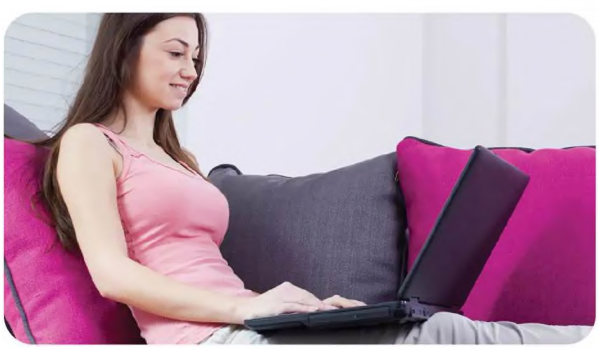
Adding Photos to Web Albums

Adding photos that you have on your computer to your Web Albums is easy using the Google Photos software.

Step 1

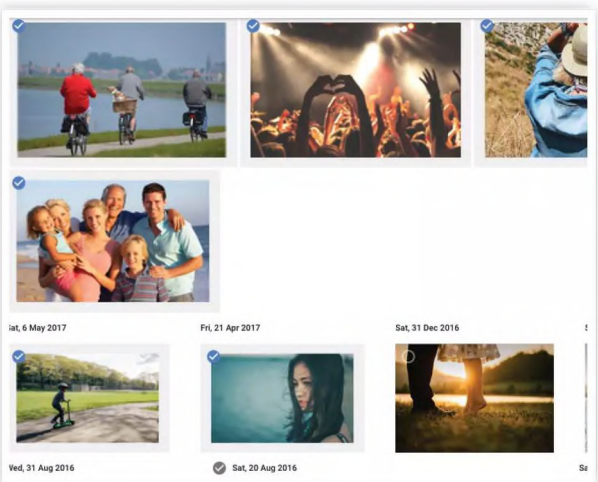
Open the Photos app and search through your photo folders to find the images you want. Each file acts as an individual but you can create new albums containing a mix of files if you wish.





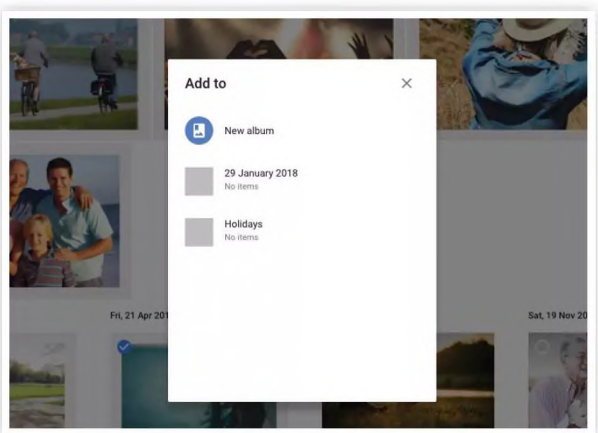
Step 2

To create a new album folder, click on the tick icon on the files you want to add to the folder. Now click the + icon in the top right of the main tool bar and select Album from the drop down list in the top right corner, as shown here.



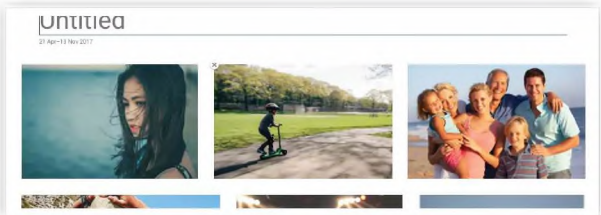
Step 3

You can choose to save to an existing Album to create a new one. Access to these albums is achieved in the same way, by clicking the link of your choice.



Step 4

Having chosen to create a new Album, you can now customise its name by entering your title into the text input box at the top of the collection of files; click the tick icon to finish . You can also add files to this folder by dragging and dropping directly.

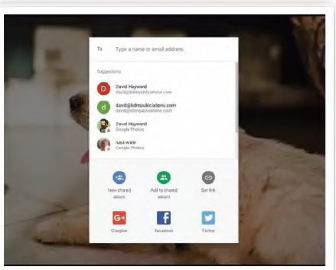


Sharing Web Albums

There are a couple of different ways to share your files and albums, depending on whether the recipients have signed up for Google.

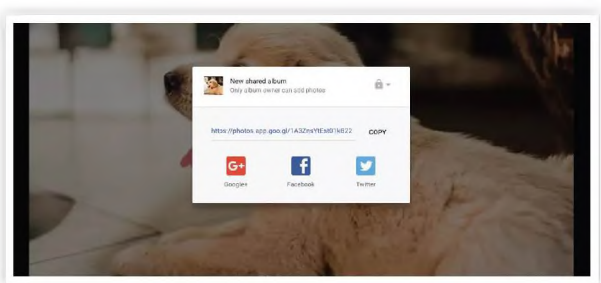
Step 1

To share a single file, click on the image to enter full screen view and then tap the Share icon on the right of the screen. From this menu screen you can share with a Google contact by clicking them.



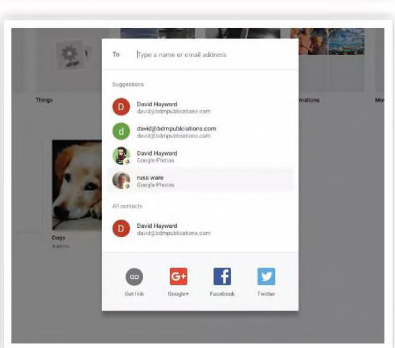
Step 2

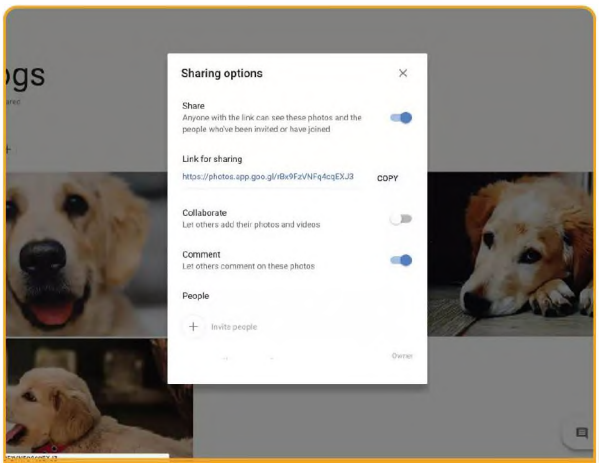
Alternatively you can share via your social networks by tapping the link to Facebook or Twitter. To share to a non-Google contact, click Get Link and then copy and paste it into a message or email.



Step 3

To share an album, click on the icon in the top right corner of the album and then click on Share. Once again you can quickly share with Google contacts by clicking on their name.





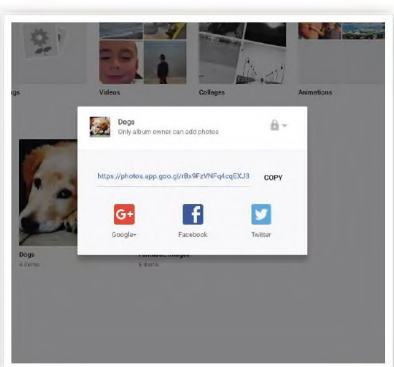
Album Access

The people you share with are added to the Shared with list in Google Photos. These people can do the following:

- If your album visibility is limited, they can view it by signing in to Photos.
- They can see the shared album on your Photos Web gallery, your Google profile and in Google+ (if you've signed up).
- Google+ users: The people you share with have permission to reshare your album. Within Google+, they can also see who else you've shared it with.

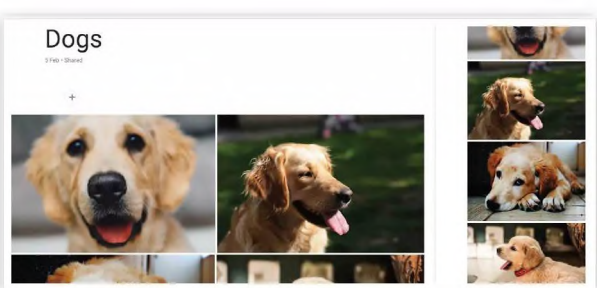
Step 4

Alternatively you can also share via your social networks by tapping the link(s). To share to a non-Google contact, click Get Link and then copy and paste it into a message or email and send the link as per usual.



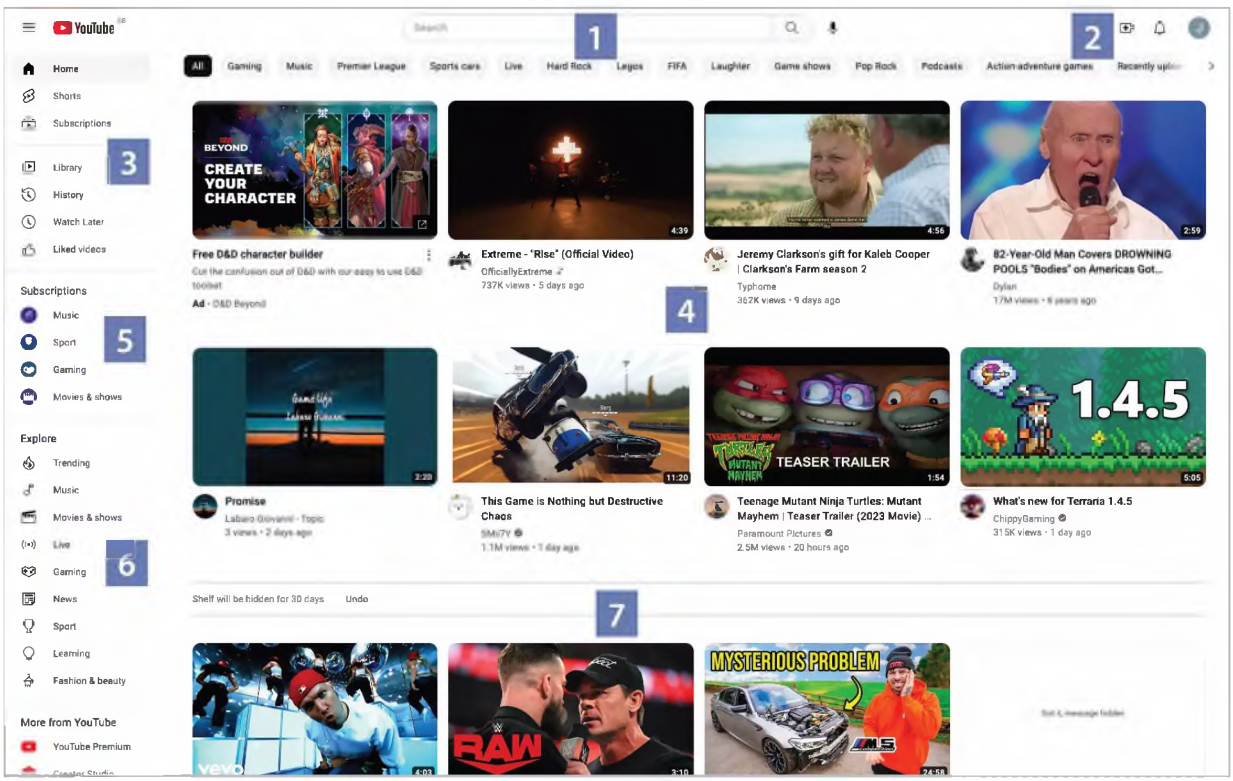
Step 5

Add a comment if you'd like to add context to your photos. This text will be posted with your photos in Google+. Add individual people or email addresses and then click Share.



Get Started with YouTube

YouTube provides a forum for people to connect, inform and inspire others across the globe and acts as a distribution platform for original content creators. More than 1 billion unique users visit YouTube, are you one?



1 Search

You can search YouTube just as you would search on Google and as you type your search term, suggestions will appear below the search box. Previously searched terms that are similar will show at the top of the suggestions box. Search results are displayed in order of relevance.

2 Upload Controls

This drop-down menu contains a direct link to the upload screen as well as links to your uploads dashboard; here you can see all of the content you have uploaded and your analytics, which shows how many times your videos have been viewed and, if you have a channel, how many subscribers you have. These controls give access to figures charting your channel.

3 Account Controls

Here you can see your viewing history, channel subscriptions, playlists you have created and social connections. You can also control or delete channel subscriptions. Social connections allows you to share your content with your Facebook or Twitter.

4 Recommended Content

If you are signed in to your account, and have viewed any videos previously, content that is recommended for you will be displayed at the top of the home page. You can view more recommended content by clicking the word "recommended". If you have subscribed to any channels, relevant content from those channels will also be included here.

5 Subscribed Channels

A list of your subscribed channels is shown here. You can click the arrow button just above the list to change how it is displayed: new content, A-Z or most relevant. Just below the channel subscriptions list is a button which takes you to the complete listing of available channels. You will also find the controls for managing channels there as well.

6 Recommended Content

The listing here is based on the videos you have watched and which channels you have previously subscribed to. Roll your mouse over the Subscribe button to see how many subscribers any channel has and click the button to instantly subscribe. A tick next to the name of the channel shows that it is verified as an official channel.

7 Latest Content

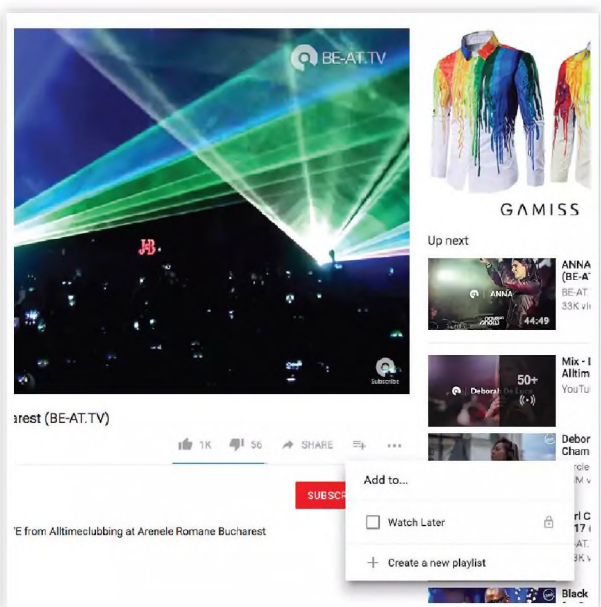
The most recent content from your subscribed channels is displayed as a list at the bottom of the screen. If you have not subscribed to any channels, this list will be populated from the most viewed content on YouTube, content that is currently trending and that which is relevant to your geographic location.

Manage Playlists

With playlists, you can put a series of videos all in one handy place. For example, you could create a playlist of all of your favourite music videos or sports clips.

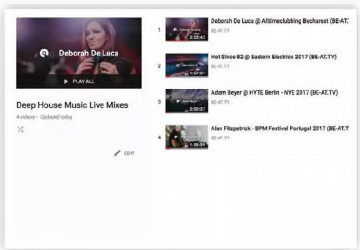
Step 1

To add videos to playlist, click the Add to link underneath a video. You can add it to a playlist that already exists or you can create a new one.



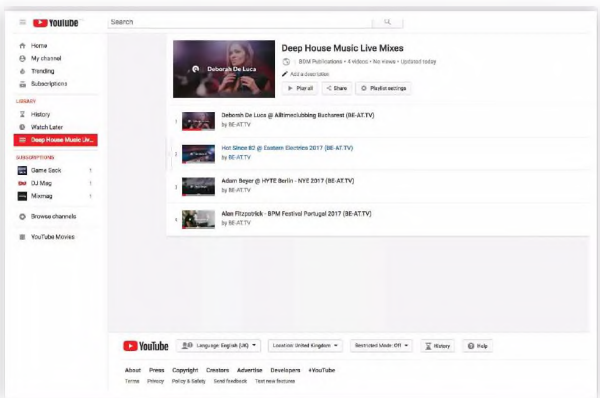
Step 2

You can make changes to your playlists by visiting your Library. This link is found on the left side of the main YouTube user window.



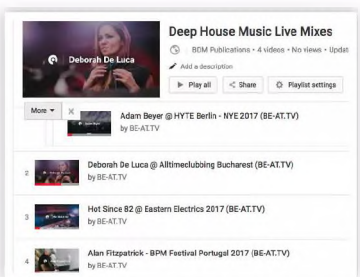
Step 3

Open the playlist you want to change and click the Edit button next to the playlist you want to edit. Click Done to save any changes you make.



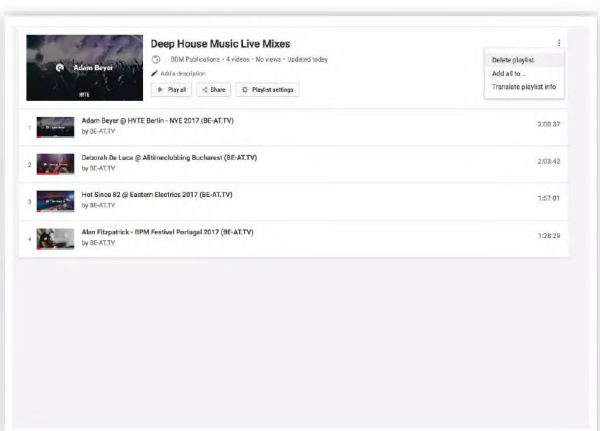
Step 4

Reorder videos in your playlist by hovering your mouse over the video until you see a grey vertical bar to the left of the video. Click the grey bar, then drag and drop the video to rearrange it.



Step 5

To delete an entire playlist, click the More icon at the top right corner of this window, then click Delete Playlist at the top of the list. Once a playlist has been removed, you cannot undo.

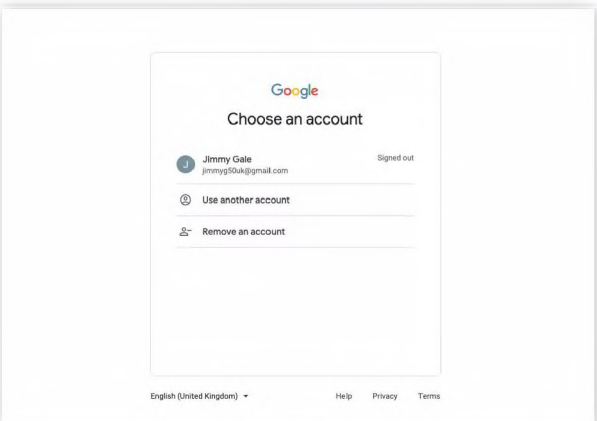


Using the YouTube App

The YouTube app gives you access to great videos and shows on all sorts of subjects. It is the gateway to a huge and always expanding world of entertainment. Follow this guide and enjoy YouTube, wherever you are.

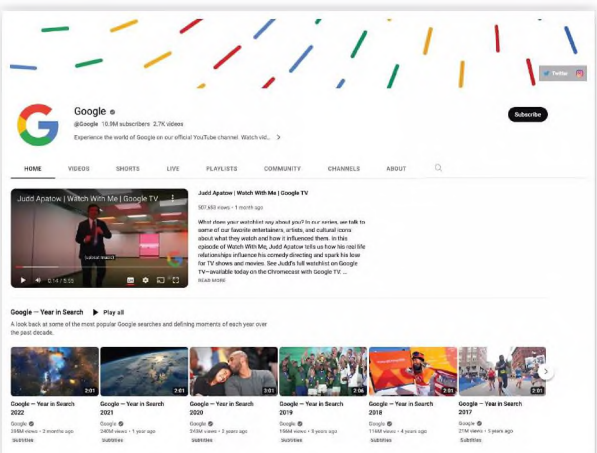
Step 1

Log in by tapping the Silhouette icon (top right corner). If you don't, you can set one up (tap Sign In then Add Account). It's a good idea to use YouTube while logged in, as this allows videos you might like to be offered as viewing suggestions.



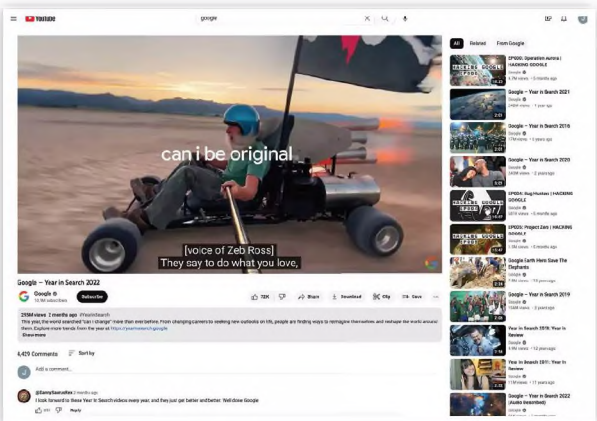
Step 2

You can search for a subject or channel using the Magnifying glass icon. You're then presented with a list of relevant videos, showing how many views they've had, their length and their uploader. Their length, in minutes, is shown in the screenshot.



Step 3

Tap on a video to open it. You might have to watch a short advert first. While watching, you can use the Thumbs icons to like or dislike it, the Share icon to share it or you can save it to your Watch Later list. Similar videos are listed below it.

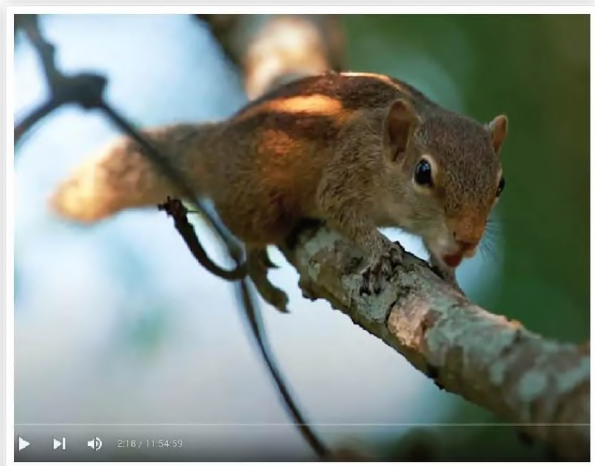


Step 4

Two more controls are worth a mention. The Show More link below the left corner of the video can be tapped to reveal or conceal further information and you can tap the Subscribe button to be informed whenever the YouTuber posts.

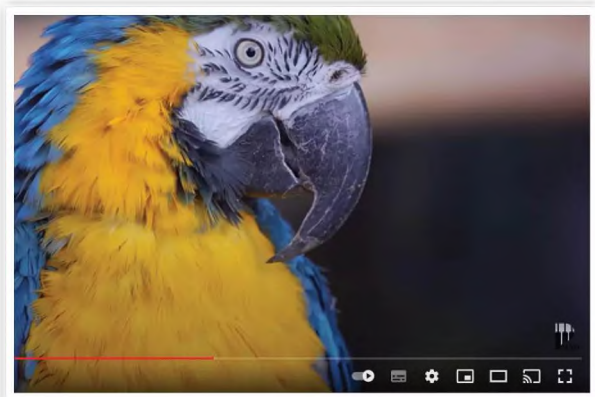
Step 5

Tap the video as it plays and you get these controls. There's the Pause/Play icon and either side are the controls to skip to the next video or restart. Scrub through the video using the red dot, or make it full screen with the icon in the bottom right.



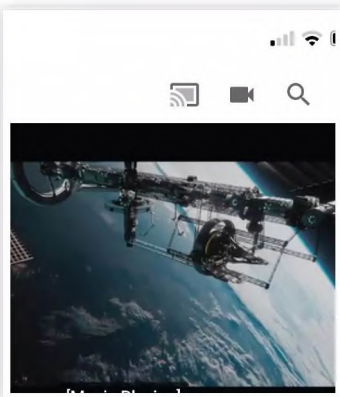
Step 6

The icons, in the bottom right, gives access to further options, such as: reporting the video, adding captions or changing the resolution. Tap the video at the top of the screen, anywhere there's no icons, to hide the controls and go back to viewing.



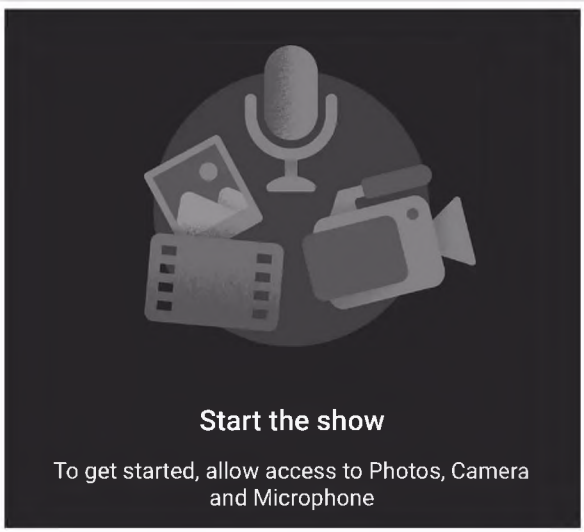
Step 7

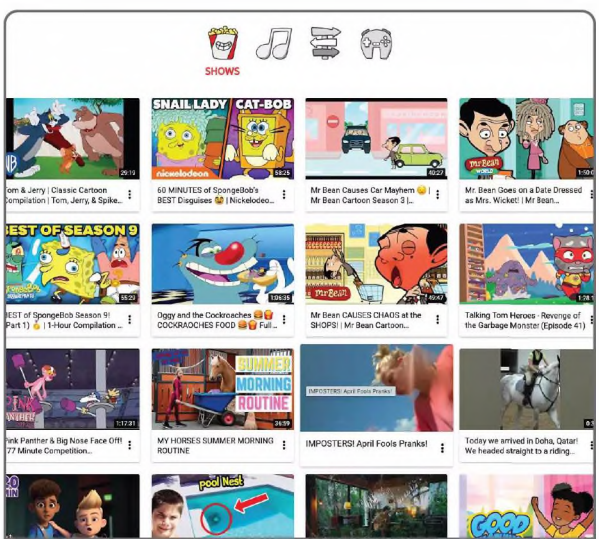
Notice the rectangular icon with the Wi-Fi icon within it. Tap this icon to stream YouTube from your tablet to a TV, using Chromecast or Airplay. Simply select the device you wish to cast to from the list and your video will instantly play on that device.



Step 8

The YouTube app also features the ability to "Go Live" with your content. This is available directly through your device if you have a camera and microphone attached or built in. To start your live stream click the camera icon and select "Go Live" to share your stream with the world. Once complete your stream will be save to your YouTube video uploads.





YouTube Kids/Gaming

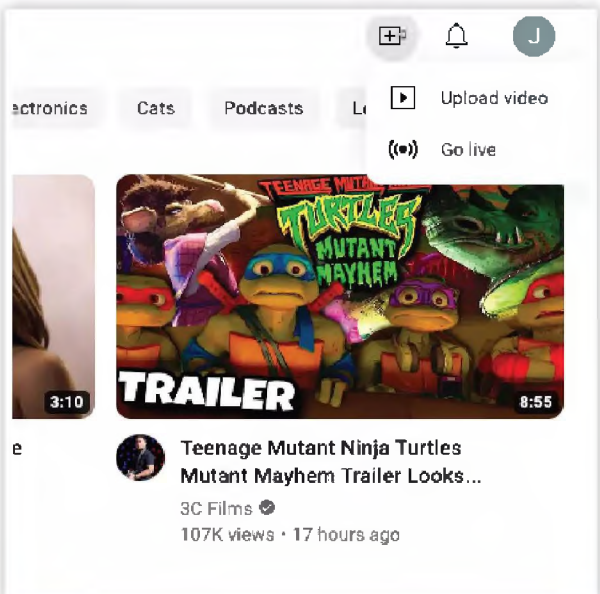
Google have two more content focused applications that sit alongside their original YouTube app, YouTube Kids and YouTube Gaming. Each of these apps, which require separate downloads, follow the same basic build as the original, albeit the content is locked to the respective app. For example YouTube kids features only child friendly videos and content and all search results will remain within these confines. Thus enabling users/parents and guardians to control the content viewed.

Uploading & Live Streaming Videos

It may sometimes seem like the whole world is uploading videos to YouTube, from the random ramblings of retro gamers to budding musicians. If you want to add your own voice to the varied world of YouTube, here's how to get started.

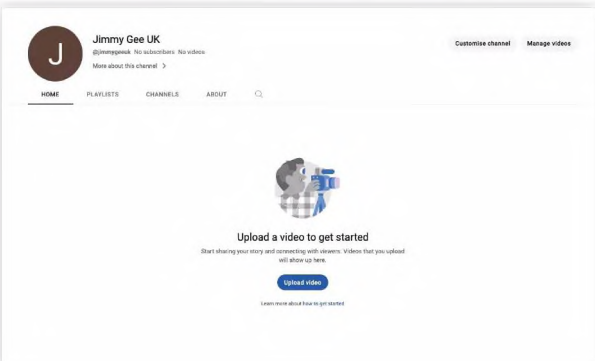
Step 1

Sign in to your YouTube account if you haven't already done so. At the top right of the screen, wherever you are in YouTube, you will see a Camera Icon. Click this to get started. Firstly you will need to create a Youtube Channel to upload your videos and, more importantly, allow others to find them and if they like them, subscribed to see more. Be careful to pick the right name as this is the your introduction to other Youtubers!



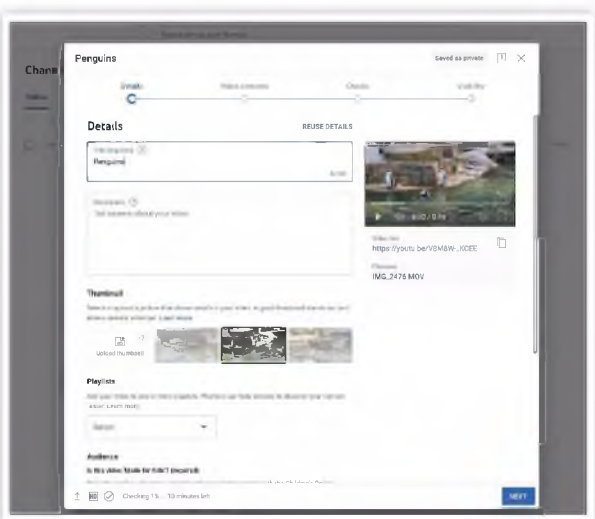
Step 2

Click anywhere in the upload window on the next screen to start browsing for your videos. Alternatively, you can drag videos onto the browser window from any open folder.



Step 3

Once you have added a video to the upload window, using either method, a new page will open. If the video file has a title, it will automatically be entered in the title box or you can edit it.



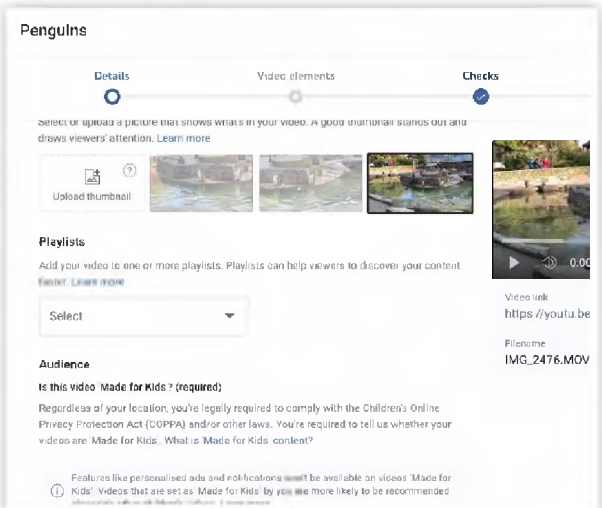
Video Formats

Not sure which format to save your video? If you receive an "invalid file format" error message when you're uploading, make sure that you're using one of the following formats:

.MOV, .MPEG4, .AVI, .WMV, .MPEGPS, .FLV, 3GPP or WebM

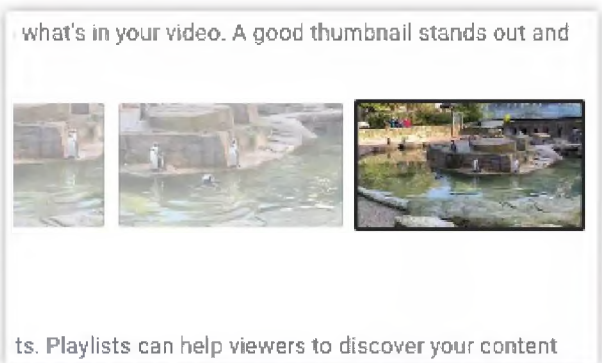
Step 4

Fill out the rest of the information, including the description and the tags, as these help make it easier for the video to be found by searchers. Try to give as much information as you can as this will widen the search and get you more views.



Step 5

When the video has finished processing, several thumbnails will automatically be grabbed from it and displayed. Click on the one you want to use as the display thumbnail on YouTube: select the one that sums up your video clip or add your own.

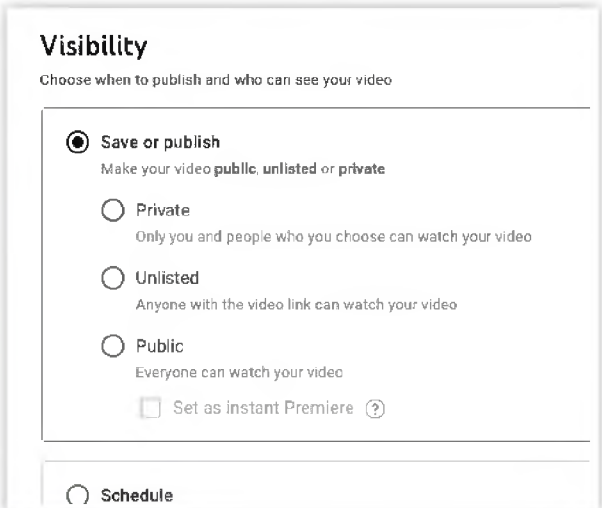


Step 6

The next stages are Checks and Visibility. Checks allows you to add your own subtitles, an end screen and in video cards to promote your channel etc. These options only appear for videos over 25 seconds in length and user generated.

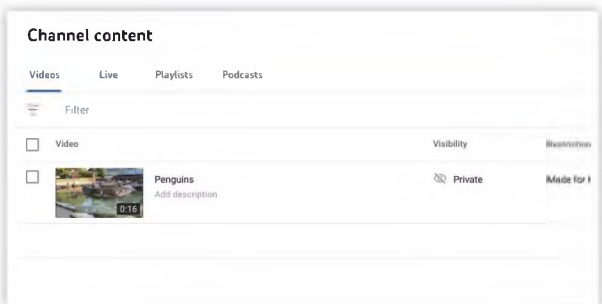
Step 7

This final stage, allows you to select Visibility, your audience for the video, you can choose, Private, Unlisted or Public. Private videos are only viewable by invite, unlisted videos aren't listed in searches and public videos are viewable by all.



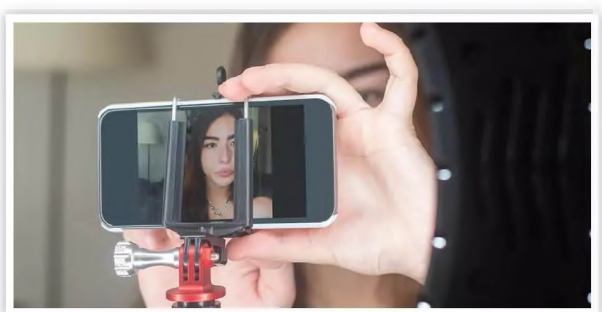
Step 8

You are now taken to the Channel Content screen, here you can view all of your videos, change some settings such as Visibility and Restrictions and check your video's stats, such as views and likes.



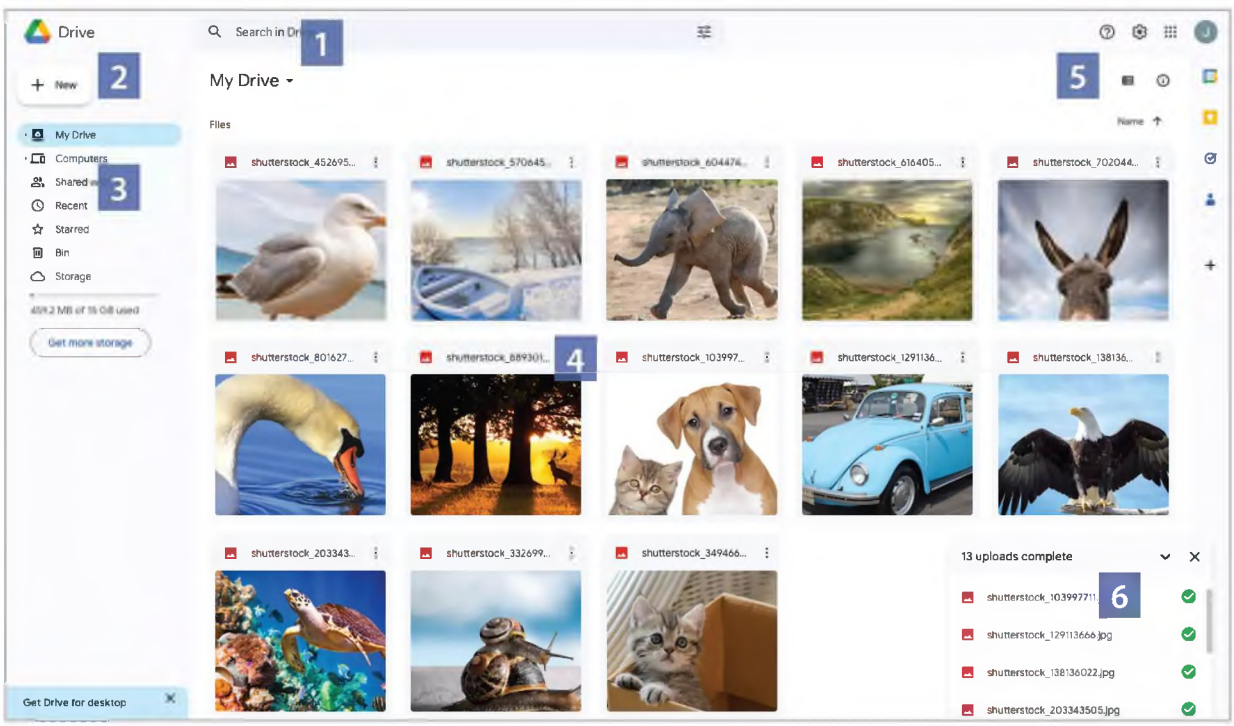
Step 9

Once your Channel is verified by adding a Phone number, you can request to Live Stream, this will take 24 hours to confirm. Once confirmed you can live stream via the Create Link and your webcam or external camera and mic to the world. Be nice!



How to Use Google Drive

Google Drive is a free storage service which allows you to store images, folders and documents in the Cloud. These files and documents can then be accessed from any tablet, phone or computer via the Google Drive software. Not only is this a great way to free up space on your devices, it also lets you access your files from almost anywhere.



1 Search

You can search Google Drive in the same way that you can search Gmail or one of the other Google products.

2 New

Click the New button to open a new document, spreadsheet, presentation, form or drawing.

3 Folders

Your preset Google Drive folders are shown here, along with any that you have created. Click More to see Labels.

4 Current Folder

The contents of the currently selected folder are shown here. You can change how items are displayed (List or Grid).

5 Display Controls

Change how items in your folders are displayed and how they are sorted. The gear icon lets you access the G Drive settings.

6 Upload List

When you upload multiple items to Google Drive, the Upload box appears, to show you the progress of each item.

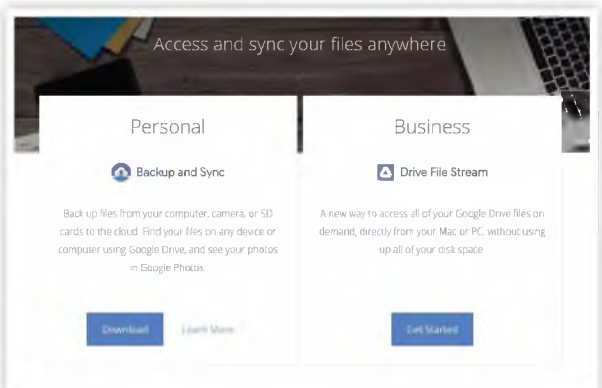
Free Google Storage

Google Drive, Google+ Photos and Gmail give you storage space for nothing so you can keep your files, emails and photos accessible from any device, anywhere. If you reach the free storage limit, everything in Google Drive, Google+ Photos, and Gmail will still be accessible but you won't be able to create or add anything new. You'll still be able to create Google Docs, since they don't take up any storage space. For G+ Photos, you will only be able to upload new photos and videos under certain size limits.

Installing Backup and Sync – PC/Mac

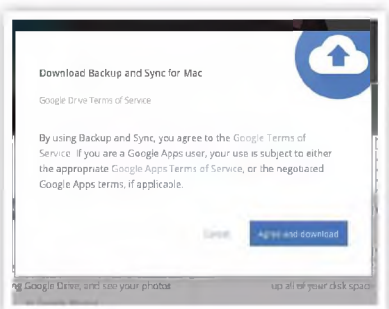
Step 1

The first thing you need to do is check your Google Drive access status. You can do this at drive.google.com/start. If you have access, you will see a blue Download button.



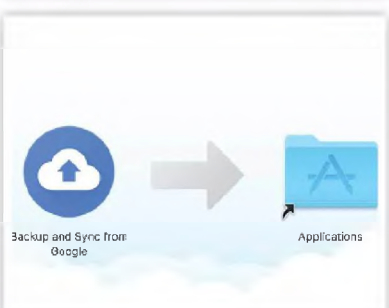
Step 2

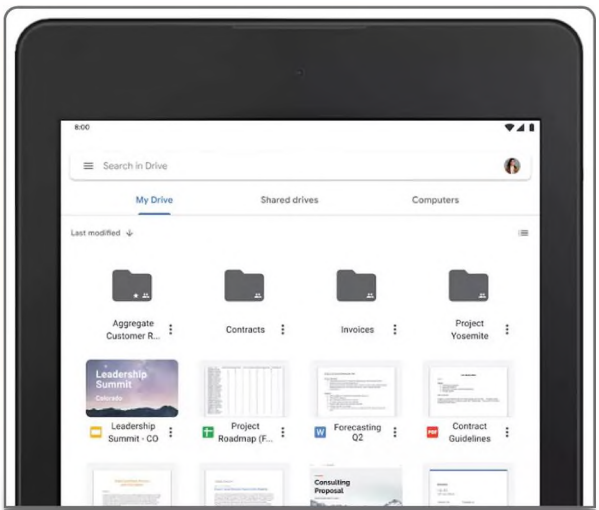
Click on the Download button and when asked to, Agree to the Google Terms of Service. You must do this before you start the download.



Step 3

Click on Download Backup and sync and follow the instructions to install the software on your computer. The site will automatically detect whether it is PC or Mac.





Google Drive on Android and iOS

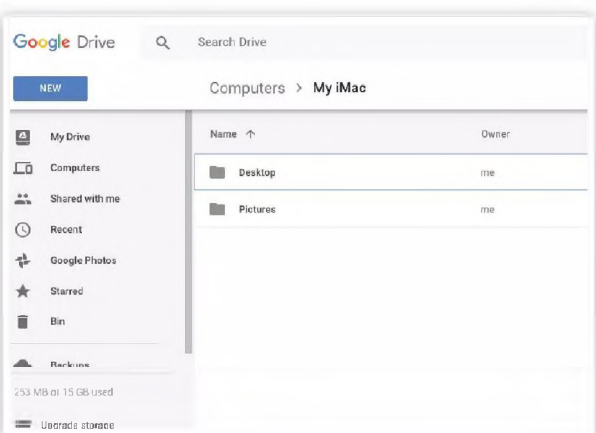
You can download the Google Drive app for mobile devices free of charge, from the Play Store or App Store. This allows you to both view and edit files in your Google Drive folders.

Once downloaded, the app should automatically sign in using the same Google account details you entered on your computer (which is also, hopefully, the one with which you set up your Android or iOS device).

You will now be able to see any files you placed in the Google Drive folder on your computer. If you had the Google Docs app installed, this will now be replaced by Google Drive. To create a new doc, tap Menu > New > Document, or Spreadsheet, etc.

Step 4

You will be asked to sign in again and will then be asked to sync. This creates a new folder on your computer which is used as the storage folder.



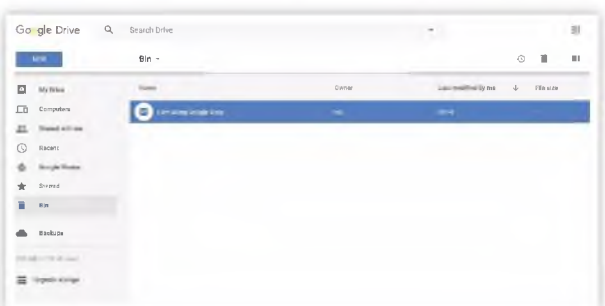
Restore Deleted Drive Files

Deleting files from Drive is a very quick process but a file you remove might not always be gone forever. You have the chance to restore deleted files before they are deleted permanently. Here is how you restore, remove and permanently delete files in Google Drive.

Restoring Incorrectly Deleted Documents

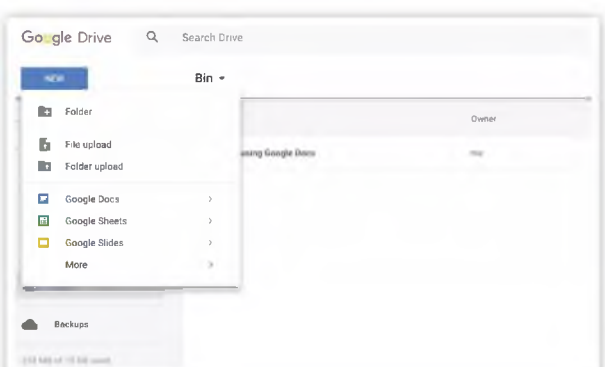
Step 1

If you decide that you don't want to delete a file or folder that you've moved to the trash, you can restore it so that you can access it again. Once you restore a file, it will be recovered wherever you use Drive or Docs, Sheets and Slides.



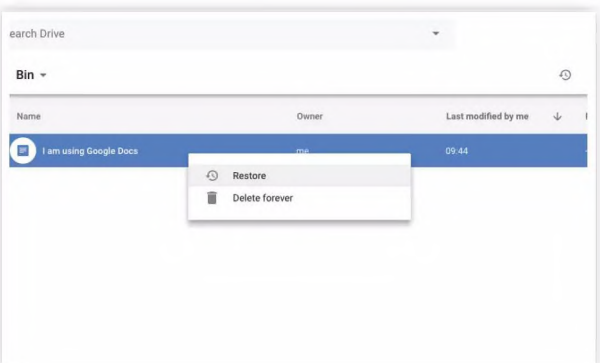
Step 2

At the moment, you can't restore a file or folder from the Drive mobile apps or from the Docs, Sheets or Slides home screens. You can restore your files from Drive on the web or on your computer. Let's look at those options here.



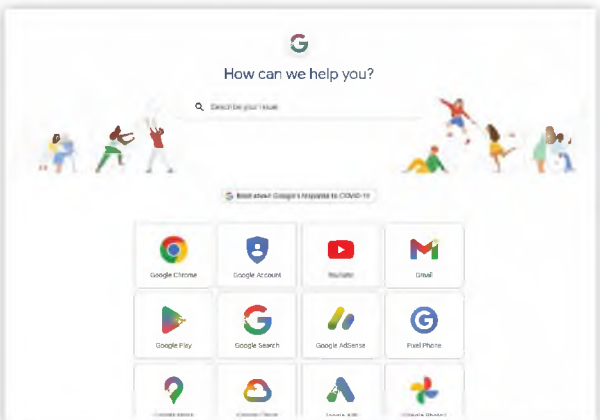
Step 3

Sign in to Drive at www.drive.google.com. Go to the Bin section on the left side of your screen and right-click the file or folder you want to restore. Click Restore to return it to its previous location. To restore a file from the trash that you don't own, you need to contact the owner of the file.



Step 4

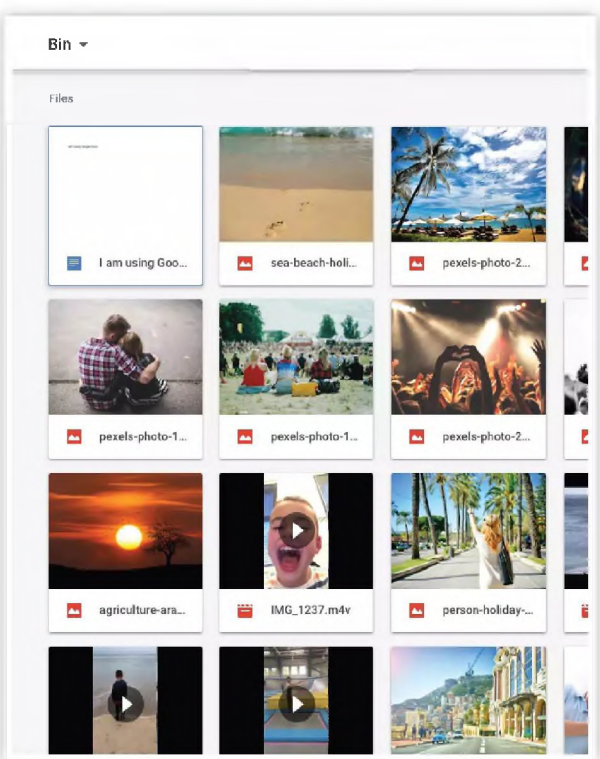
If you permanently delete a file or folder that you realise you need access to, Google is able to help you recover it for a limited time. However, after the file has been deleted from Google's systems, it's gone forever. You can request recovery from Google themselves at www.support.google.com.



Removing Files

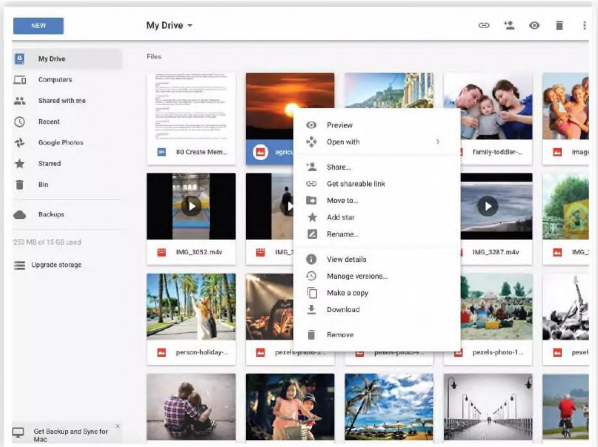
Step 1

Open the Google Drive folder on the desktop of your computer, select the file or folder you want to remove and drag it to the trash on your computer. A file you remove from the Drive folder on your computer will be moved to the trash in Drive on the web and in the Drive, Docs, Sheets and Slides.



Step 2

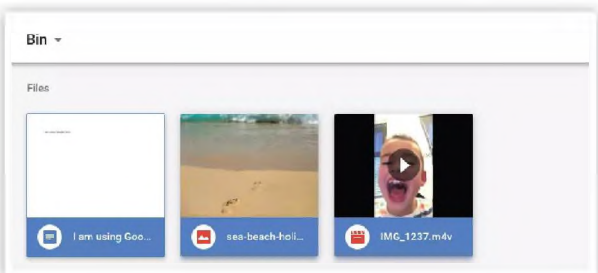
To remove files in Drive online, sign into Drive at www.drive.google.com. Now click or right-click the file or folder you want to remove and then click the Remove icon; as with removing files on your computer, anything removed is deleted.



Permanently Delete Files

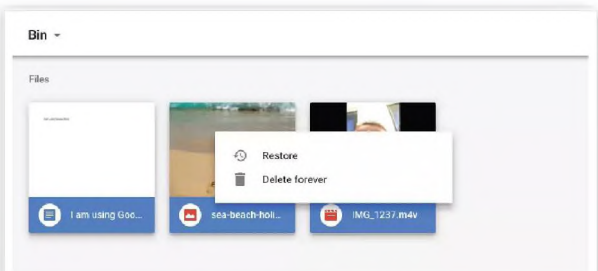
Step 1

If you want to permanently delete a file or folder you own, you can delete an individual file or empty your entire trash to delete all files you have removed. Once a file has been deleted, anyone you've shared the file with will lose access to the file as well.



Step 2

To permanently delete files you added to the trash from the Drive folder on your computer, simply empty the trash on your desktop. The files, along with anything else you trashed, will be deleted. On the web, sign in to Drive, go to Bin and select the file. Click Delete Forever. The file is now been deleted for good.



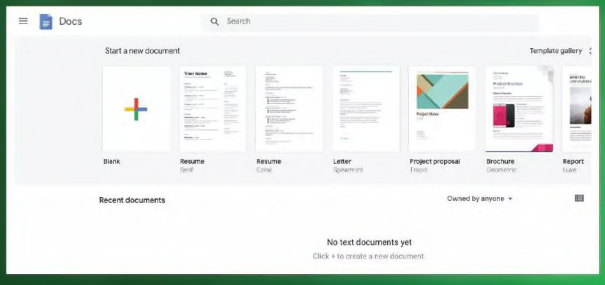
Set Up and Use Google Docs

Google Docs is a free, web-based office suite. Using this software you can create text documents, spreadsheets, complex forms and even presentations. Everything you create is stored via your Google Drive account. Here's how to make the most of Google Docs.

Creating New Documents

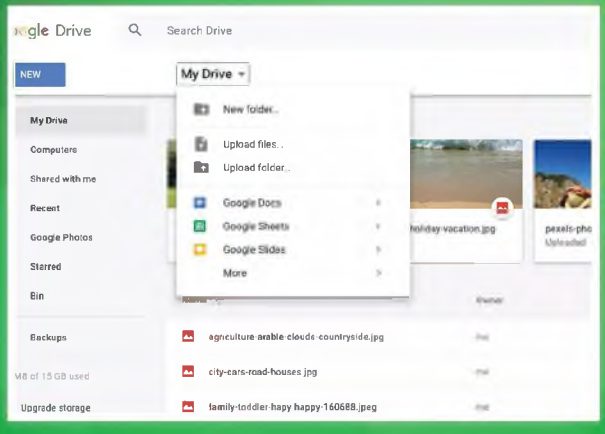
Step 1

There are several different ways of getting started with Google Docs. You can create a new online document, you can upload an existing document to edit or you can use a template from the templates gallery. Let's start with a new Google doc.



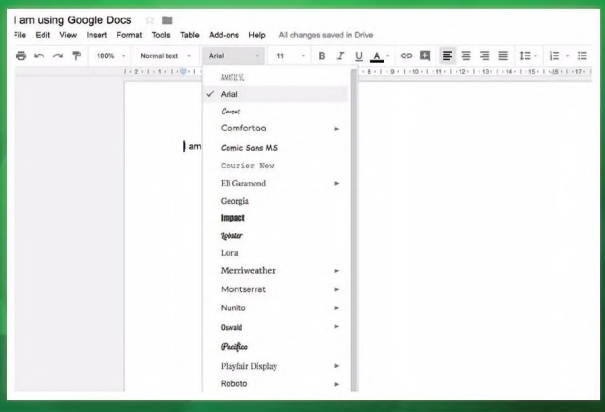
Step 2

To create a new document, go to your Drive, click the downward pointing arrow and select Google Docs from the menu, then pick either Blank or Template. Name the document by entering the text in the top left corner, this will also start auto-save.



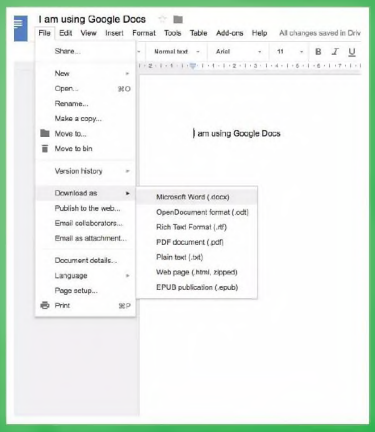
Step 3

Along the top of the document you will find the editing and formatting tools. If you have ever used Microsoft Word or OpenOffice Writer, you should be familiar with most of the formatting options here.



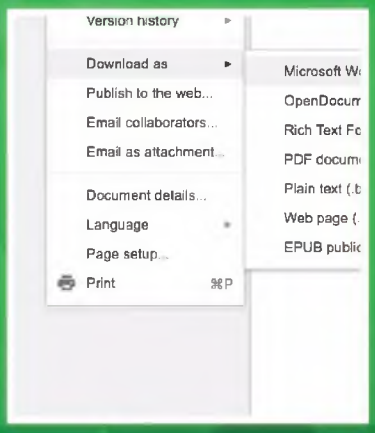
Step 4

You can also save a copy of any document to your computer if you wish. To save a copy of any document in the Drive, open it and go to the File menu. Roll the mouse pointer over the Download As... option.



Step 5

Select one of the following file types: HTML (zipped), RTF, Word, Open Office, PDF or plain text. Your document will then download to your computer. The original document will remain in Google Drive.

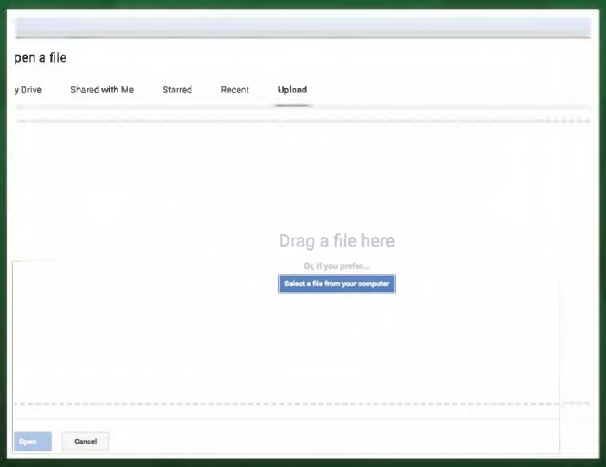


Import Documents

You can import a variety of documents into Google Drive and then either keep them as they were originally formatted or convert them into Google Docs.

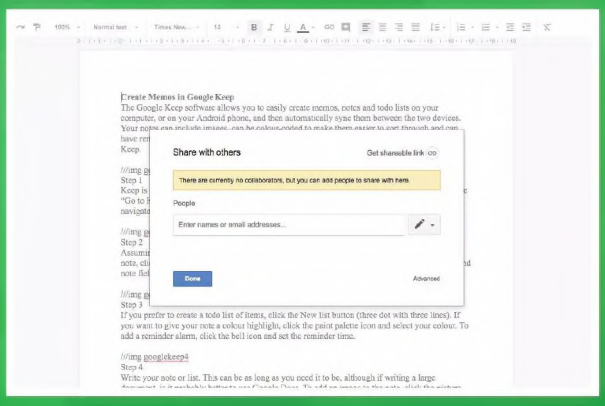
Step 1

Open a new Google Doc and click the File link at the top left of your documents options list. Click Open and then click Upload. The Upload window will appear leaving you to drag and drop your file into this window. The file will open automatically.



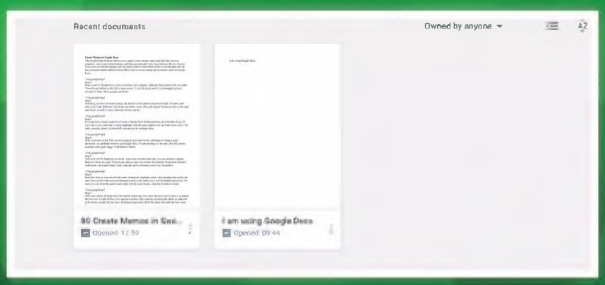
Step 2

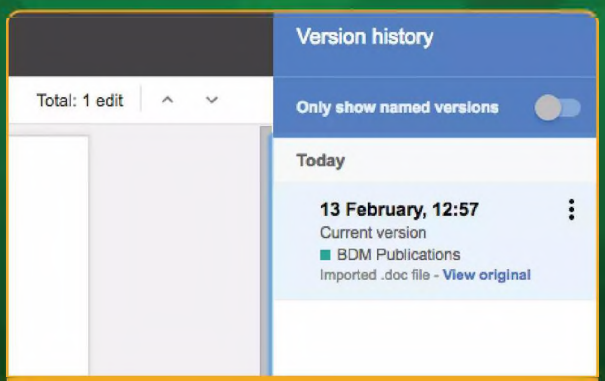
When the document has uploaded, click the File option, as before. From these links click on Email collaborators and enter the details of those you wish to share the file. This allows you to edit and collaborate on the document online.



Step 3

Having uploaded a compatible document to Google Docs, said file will instantly be saved to your Google Drive. These files are then accessible from the main Google docs menu screen, shown here. NOTE: Files to be converted by Docs can't be larger than 1 MB.



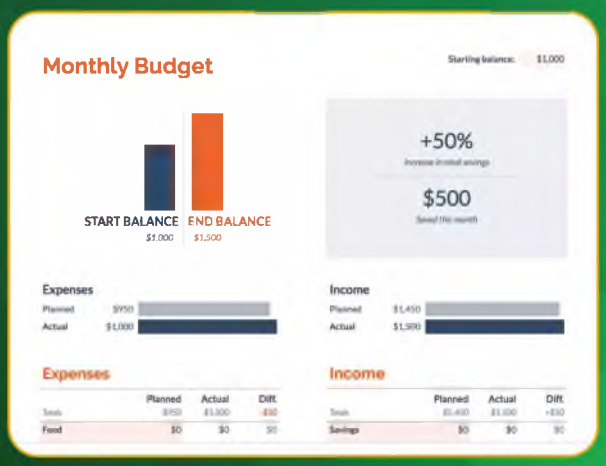


Time Machine

Google Drive tracks every change you make to files and documents you store there, so when you hit the Save button a new revision is saved. You can use the tools in Google Drive to look back as far as 30 days automatically, or choose a specific revision to save forever.

How to Use Google Sheets

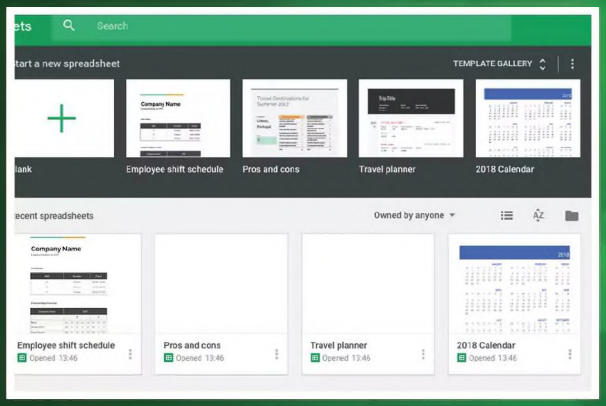
With Google Sheets you can create spreadsheets online, work on them with others in real-time and then store them online in Google Drive. Google Sheets, for most users, is more than capable of replacing the corresponding software in something like Microsoft Office.



Create and Save Spreadsheets

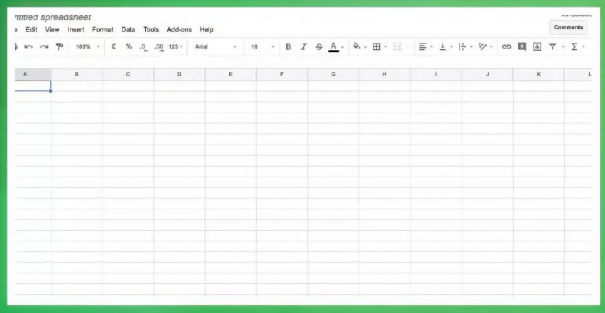
Step 1

❱ There are different ways of getting started with Google Sheets. You can create a new spreadsheet, upload an existing spreadsheet from a computer or use a template from the templates gallery, to create a spreadsheet with a specific purpose.



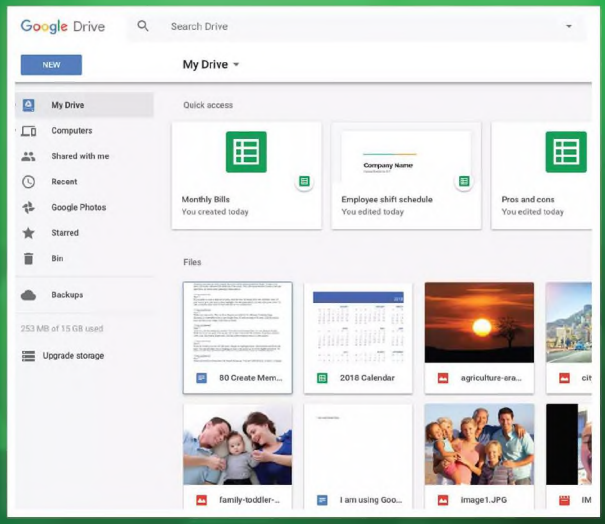
Step 2

❱ To create a new spreadsheet, go to your Google Drive, click the NEW button and select Google Sheet from the drop-down menu. Once you name the spreadsheet or start typing. Google Sheets will automatically save your work every few seconds.



Step 3

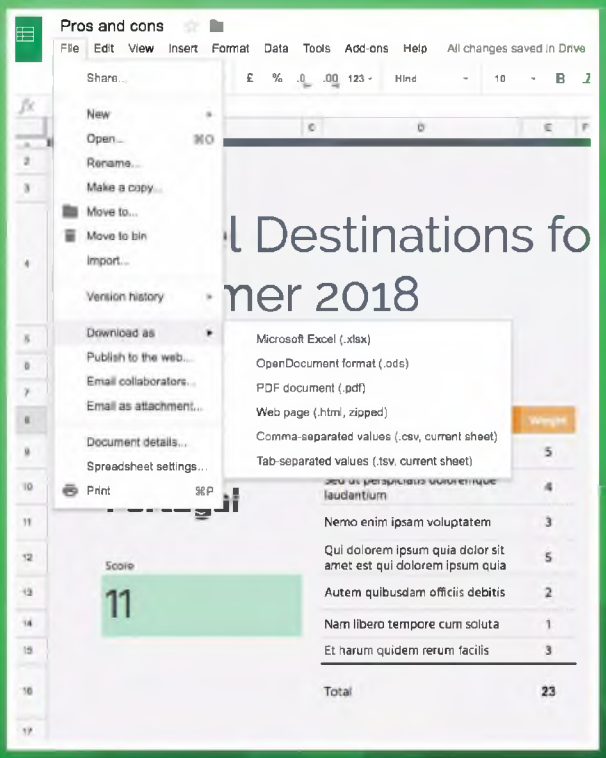
❱ Give your Sheet a title. At the top of the spreadsheet, you will see text that indicates when your spreadsheet was last saved. You can access your spreadsheet at any time by opening your Drive at www.drive.google.com. Here you will see it as a saved file.



Uploading Spreadsheets

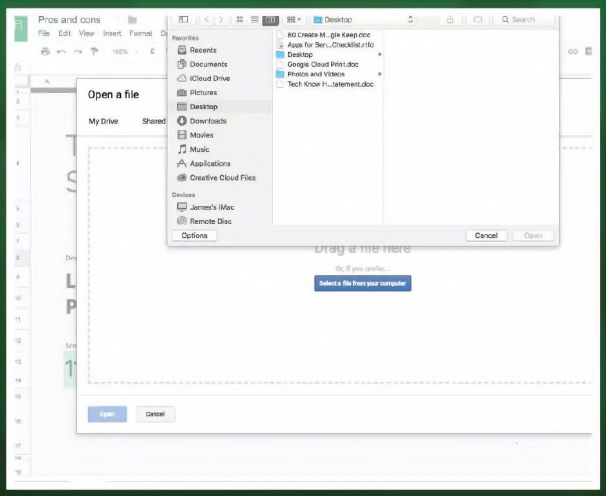
Step 1

When you upload a spreadsheet into Google Drive, you have the choice to keep your spreadsheet in the original format or convert it into the Google Docs format. If you don't convert the spreadsheet, you may not be able to access it collaboratively.



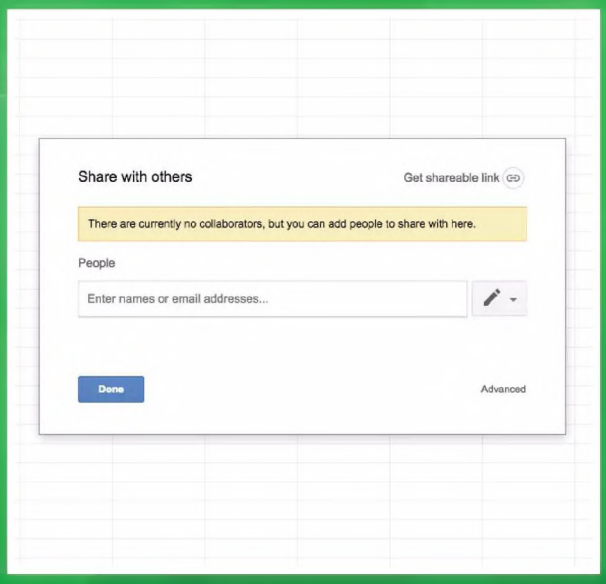
Step 2

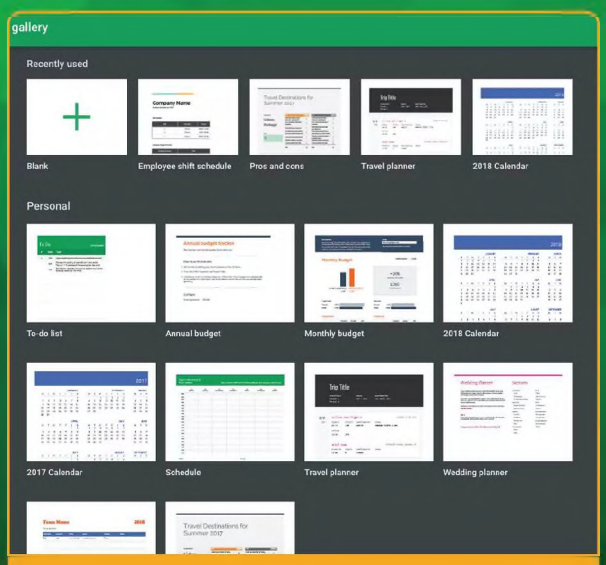
Open a new Google Sheet and click the File link at the top left of your documents options list. Click Open and then Upload. The Upload window will appear leaving you to drag and drop your file into this window. The file will open automatically.



Step 3

When the document has uploaded, click the File option, as before. From these links click on Email collaborators and enter the details of those with whom you wish to share the file. This allows you to edit and collaborate on the Google Sheet document online.





Using Sheets Templates

If you want to quickly create a spreadsheet, you can pick one of the templates in the templates gallery. Each template has standard text that you can replace with your own, and preset formatting that you can reuse. You can also create a spreadsheet with a template directly from your Documents List. Click the red Create button and select From template....

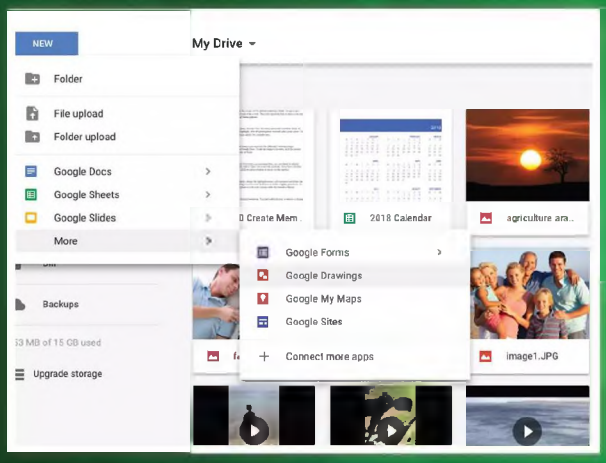
Set Up and Use Google Drawings

Google Drawings allows you to create, share and edit documents online and collaborate with others by inviting them to view your edits. You can even chat with others from within the app, in real-time, before you save or publish your drawings online as an image or in many other image formats.

Create a New Drawing

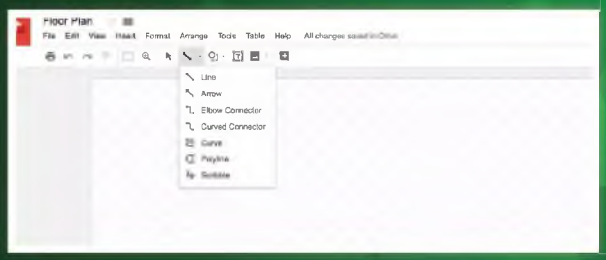
Step 1

To start creating drawings in Google Docs, go to your Docs list, click the NEW button and select Drawing from the More menu. Then, using the menu options and buttons in the toolbar, you can create flow charts, design diagrams and other drawings.



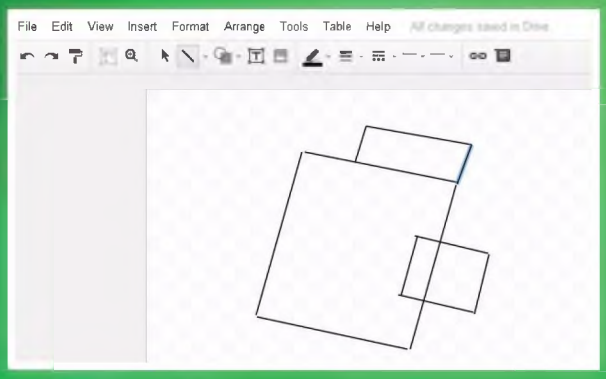
Step 2

Click on the tools at the top of the screen to select them. These range from arrows, lines and poly-lines, to shapes and text boxes. You can also insert images or photos using the image button. To place a line, for example, click to place one end of the line and drag to the other end.



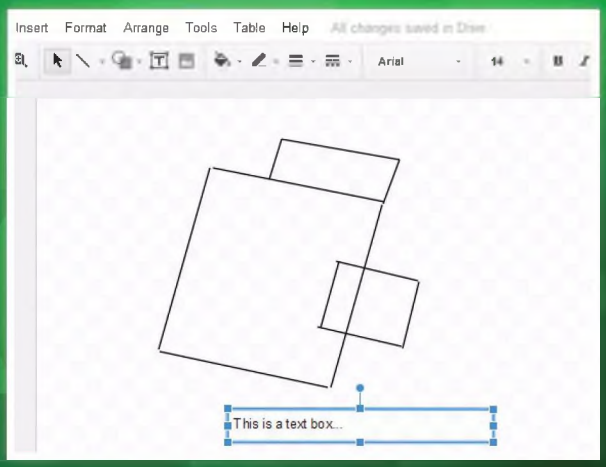
Step 3

In line, arrow and scribble modes, you can keep adding lines until you go back to select mode by clicking the Select button from the toolbar (the small arrow to the left of the Shapes button) or pressing the Esc key.



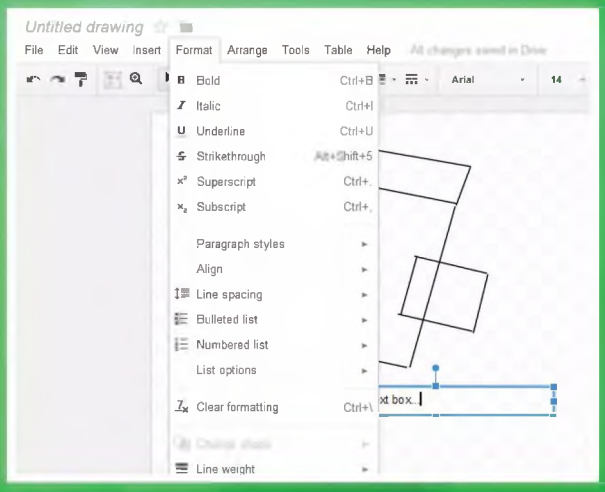
Step 4

To insert a text box, select it and click where you want to add the text box. Enter your text and press Enter. Your text will be added to your drawing. Use text boxes instead of word art if you'd like to use word wrap or specify a different text size.



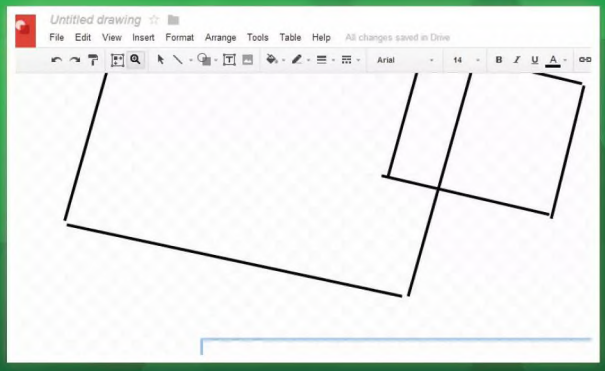
Step 5

The Format menu lets you change the background of your drawing, align and rotate items, select snap to grid or snap to guide, change the order of the items (for example, bring a shape forward) and group items.



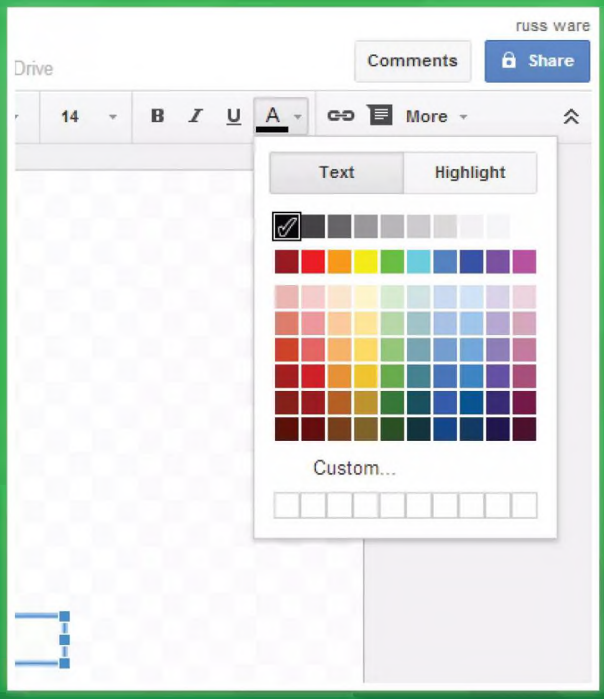
Step 6

You can undo and redo changes by clicking the two arrows to the left end of the toolbar. To zoom in and out on your drawings, click the Zoom button in the toolbar.



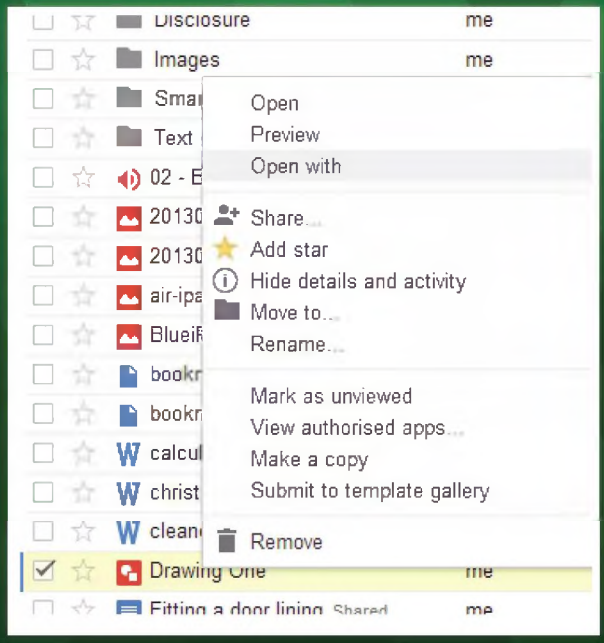
Step 7

Some editing options are available only when you've selected a specific item. For example, when you insert a text box or word art, you can see the Edit text button at the right end of the toolbar. Click it to change the selected text.



Step 8

Once you're done, your drawing is automatically saved. You can then add it to a document, presentation or spreadsheet. To do this, open the document you want to add the drawing to, click Insert and then select Drawing.



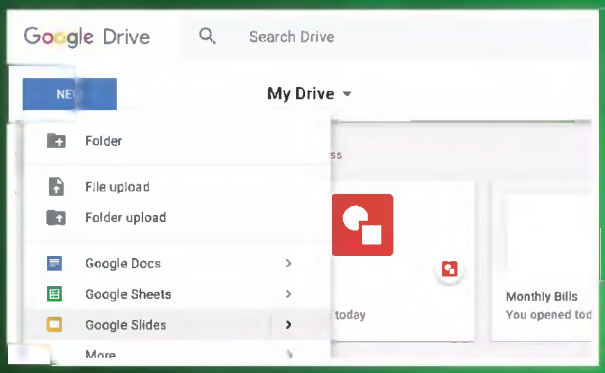
How to Use Google Slides

Google Slides is an online presentation app that allows you to show off your work in a visual way. There are different ways of getting started using Google Slides: you can create a new online presentation, you can upload an existing one or you can use a template from the gallery.

Creating a Presentation

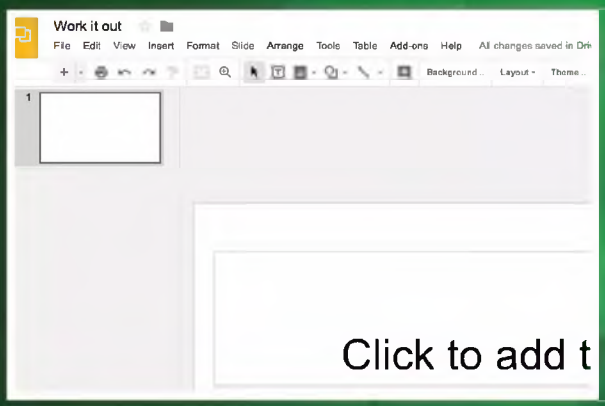
Step 1

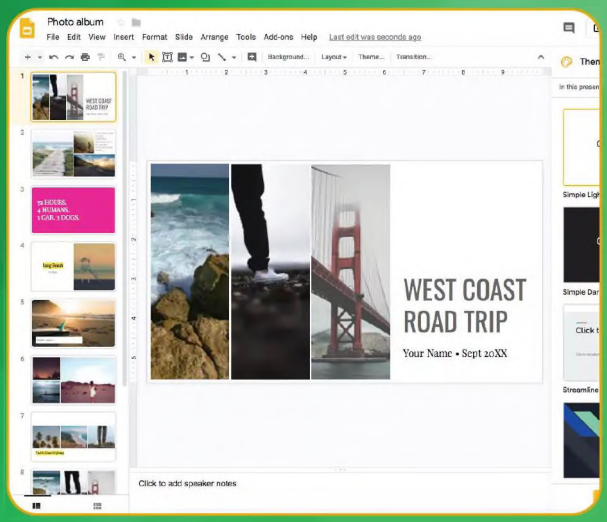
Just like creating any new document in Google Docs, to create a new presentation go to your Documents List, click the NEW button and select Google Slides from the drop-down menu.



Step 2

When you give your document a name and start typing, Google Docs will automatically save your work. Auto-save will continue to save at intervals whenever the document is open and being worked on. You can work from a template or free hand.





Step 3

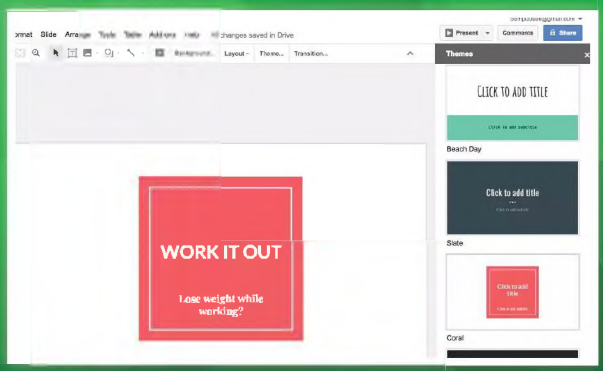
There are several ways to format text and objects on a slide. To get started, click on the object you want to format, resize or move. To add custom formatting to text or to an object, you can use the Format menu or the Edit toolbar.

Step 4

To select multiple objects, hold the Shift key while selecting each object or drag your mouse over all of the objects you'd like to select. To deselect one or more objects, press the Shift key and click the objects.

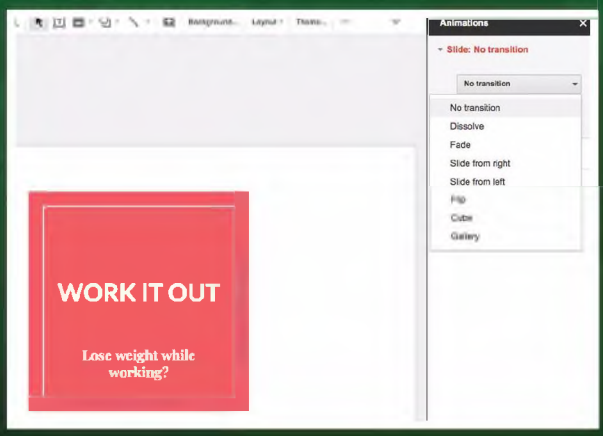
Step 5

To change or add a theme to your presentation in real time, go to the Slide menu, and select Change theme. Select the theme you'd like to use and it is automatically applied to all of the slides in your presentation.



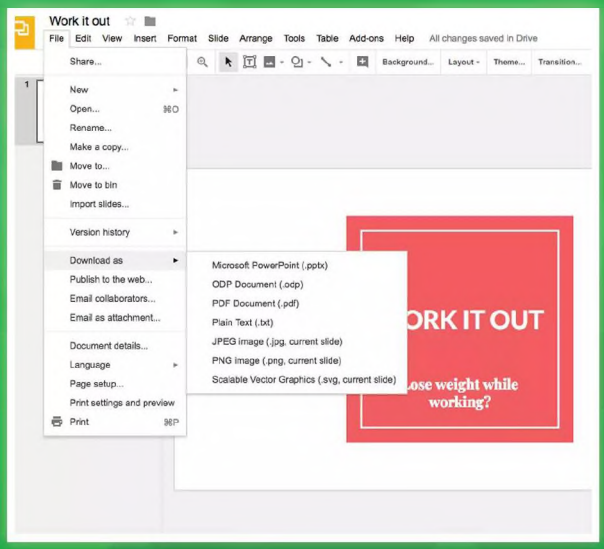
Step 6

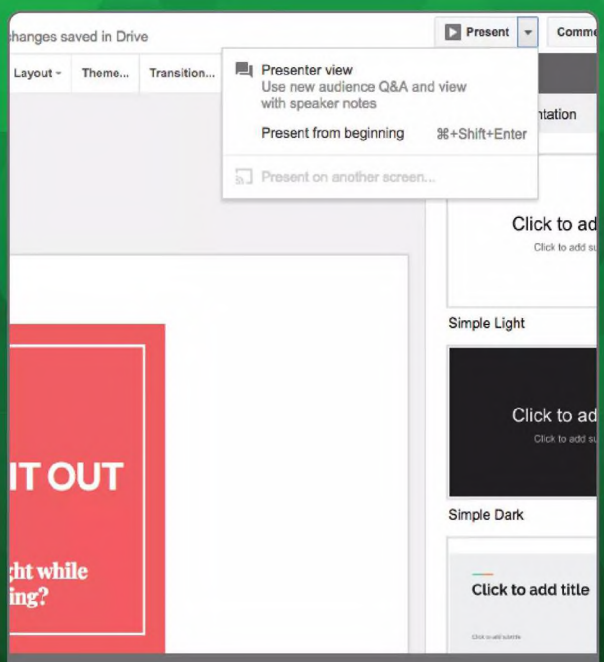
Transitions are a way to make your presentations look more dynamic. You can animate elements such as bullet points or even a list of images; for example, making them slide in from off screen. Go to the View menu and select Transitions.



Step 7

To save a copy of a presentation to your computer rather than online, you can download it. In your document, go to the File menu and point your mouse to the Download as option. Select a file type and your presentation will download.





Viewing Presentations

To show a finished presentation, select Start Presentation in the top right of the screen. A new window opens, displaying your presentation one slide at a time. To skip from one slide to the next, use the arrow keys on your keyboard or click the arrow icon in the grey bar at the bottom of your presentation. To close the presentation viewer, press the Esc key.

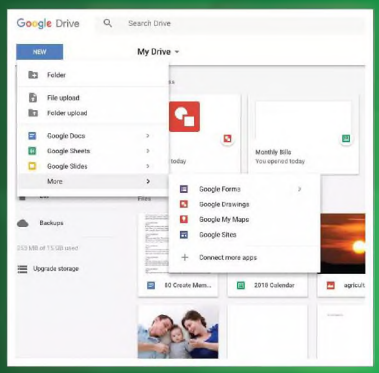
Use Templates and Forms

If there is a specific type of document you want to create in Google Docs, Sheets, Slides or Forms, check the template gallery to see if there is one available. The template gallery includes hundreds of pre-made documents, from a simple CV to multi-page company presentations. We also look at the Google Forms app and see how it can be used.

Browse the Template Gallery

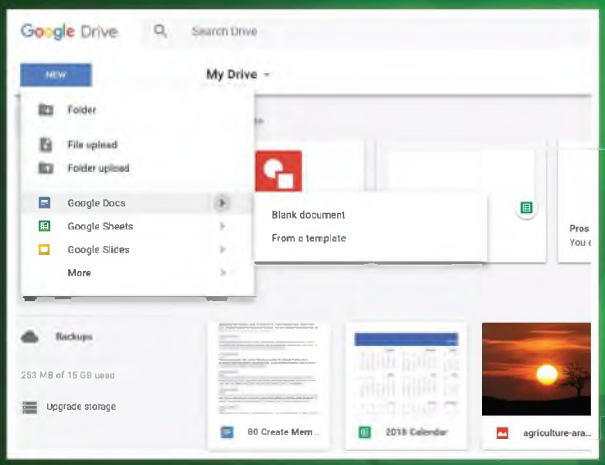
Step 1

Open Google Drive and click on the NEW button on the left of the window. Select Document, Presentation, Spreadsheet or Form from the drop-down menu (depending on what type of document you want to create).



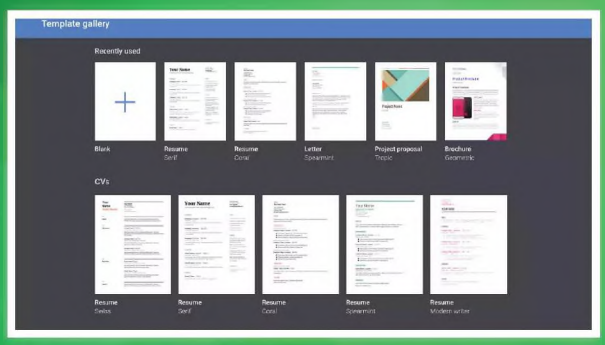
Step 2

From within one of these document types, click File > New > From Template. This will open the main Google Docs template gallery. You can now scroll down through the listings to see which one would be the best fit for your project.



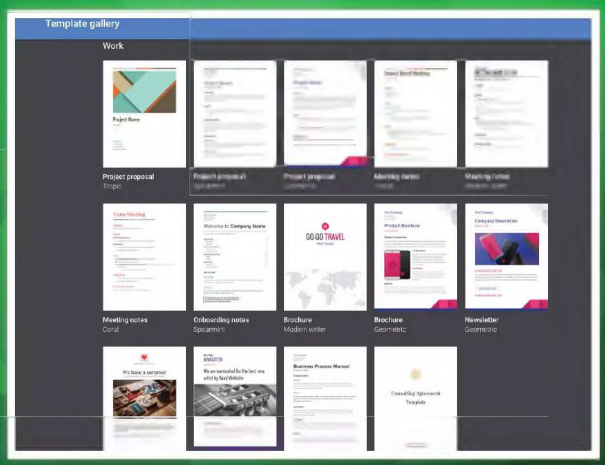
Step 3

By default, the most popular templates from all categories will be shown on screen when you first enter the gallery. You can choose to view specific types of template using the links on the left-hand side of the screen.



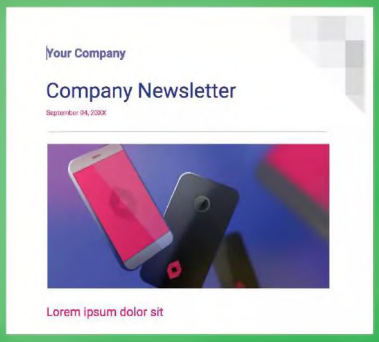
Step 4

You can also search for specific templates based upon the recommended uses, which are used to break up the layout of the templates. Taking Google Docs as an example you have templates for CV's, Letters, Personal, Work and Sales.



Step 5

Each template will have a thumbnail image preview. If you want to see more detail of how the document is laid out, click the Preview button. You can then click Close this window or Use this template.

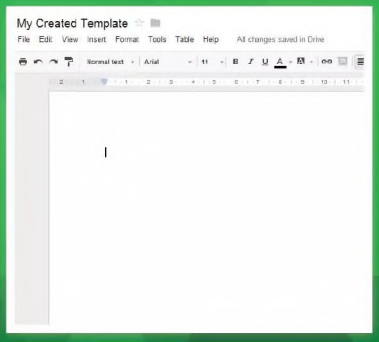


Create and Share Templates

You can create your own templates and either keep them for your own use or share them with the Google Template Gallery, so that others can use them.

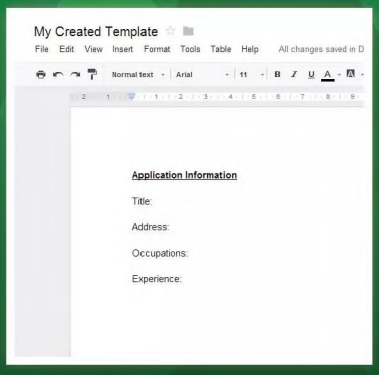
Step 1

Open Google Drive and click on the NEW button. Click on Doc, Sheet, Presentation or Form. Once your chosen blank document is open, you can begin to create a template.



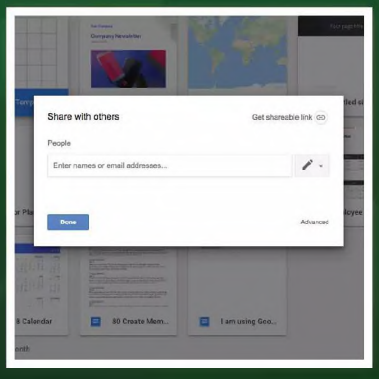
Step 2

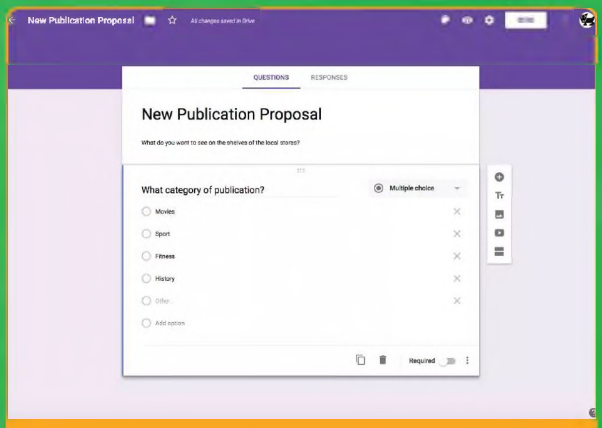
When creating a template that is going to be shared in the template gallery, avoid filling it with specific text and images. People using the template later will almost certainly want to put their own content into it.



Step 3

When your template is finished, save it and return to the main Google Drive screen. Select the template file in the list of documents using the Share link. Add contacts or get a shareable link to email to them.



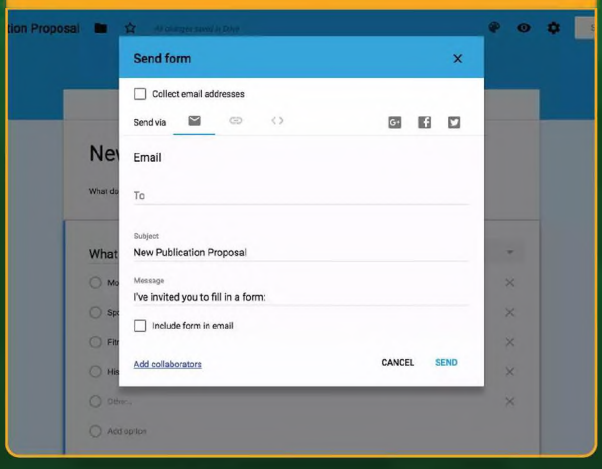


Using Google Forms

Adding a further tool to the already impressive listing, you can use the Google Forms app to create online surveys and quizzes and then share them with your family, friends or work colleagues.

To start a new Google Form you will need to return to the Google Drive home page and from there click the NEW button and select Google Forms from the More option on the drop-down menu. You will now need to give your form a title and a description. Now you can start to build your questions. Enter your first question and select from the options given when clicking the answer options menu on the right. You can choose from multiple choice or text entry.

To add another question tap the + icon on the right side bar. Here you can also add images, videos or sub category descriptions. You can literally be as in-depth or simple as you wish. When you have finished your Google Form, you can change the colour pattern, preview the finished form or select the format, questionnaire or quiz using the setting icons top right. Finally tap Send to enter the details of who you want to share the form with. Click send for a second time to complete the process.
To check the answers click on Responses at the top of the text input box, here you can view all completed forms.



How to Use Google Cloud Print

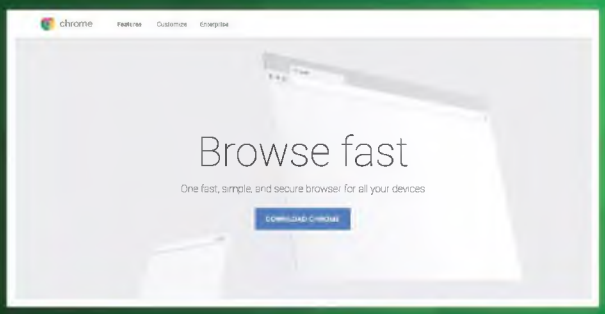
Google Cloud Print is smart technology that connects your printers to the web. Using Google Cloud Print, you can make your home and work printers available to you, from the apps you use every day. It works on your phone, tablet, PC and any other web-connected device you want to use.

How to Connect with Cloud Ready Printers

You can use Google Cloud Print with a cloud-ready printer (printers which can connect directly to the Internet and do not need a PC to work). There are still plenty that are not but we are concentrating on the cloud-ready type for this article.

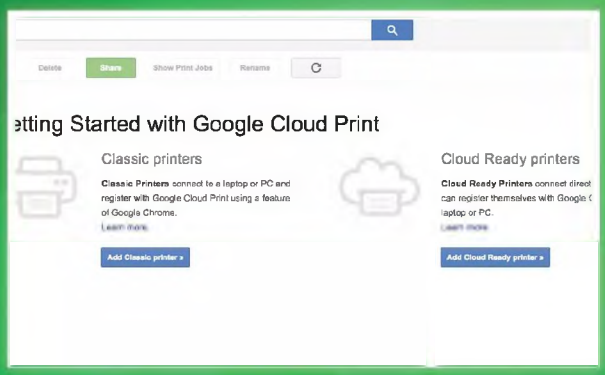
Step 1

❱ The first thing you need to do, if you do not already have it installed, is download the latest version of Google Chrome and install it. Once installed, Log in to your user account on the Windows, Mac or Linux computer.



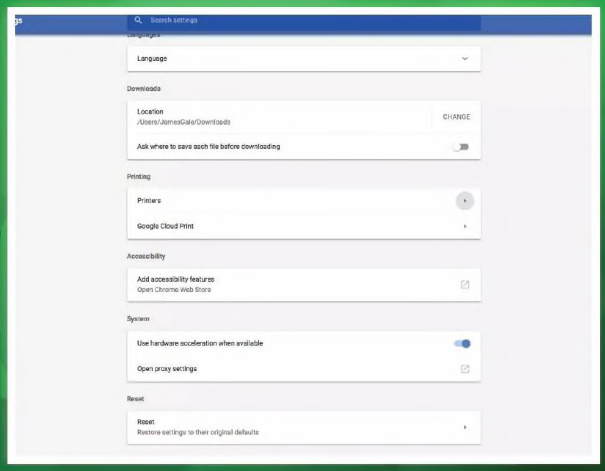
Step 2

❱ Open Google Chrome, click the Chrome menu on the browser toolbar and select Settings. Now click the Show advanced settings link. Scroll down to the Google Cloud Print section and click Sign in to Google Cloud Print.



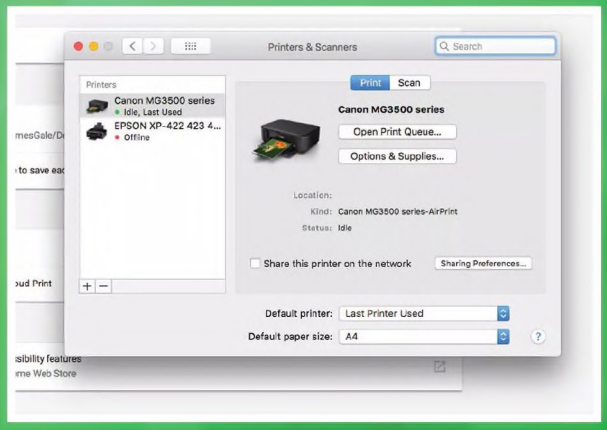
Step 3

❱ In the window that appears, sign in with your Google Account details to enable the Google Cloud Print connector. Hopefully you will see the printer connected to your computer. Select the printer you want to connect to and then click Add printer.



Step 4

You will then see a confirmation that Google Cloud Print has been enabled. The printer is now associated with your Google account and connected to Google Cloud Print. You can print to this printer using Google Cloud Print as long as you sign in with the same Google account.

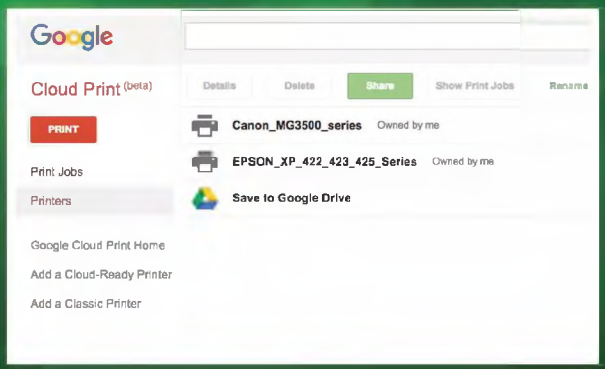


Sharing a Printer

If your friends or colleagues have Google accounts, you can share your printer with them and let them print to it from anywhere that has an Internet connection.

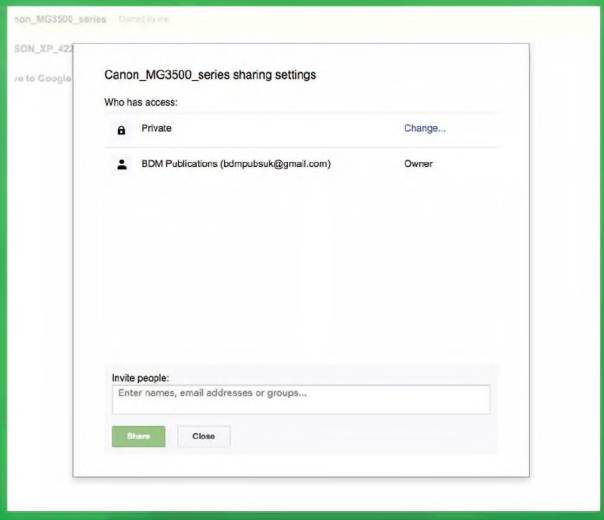
Step 1

To begin sharing your cloud connected printer, head to the Google Cloud Print management page at www.google.com/cloudprint. This shows you a complete list of any printers associated with your Google account.



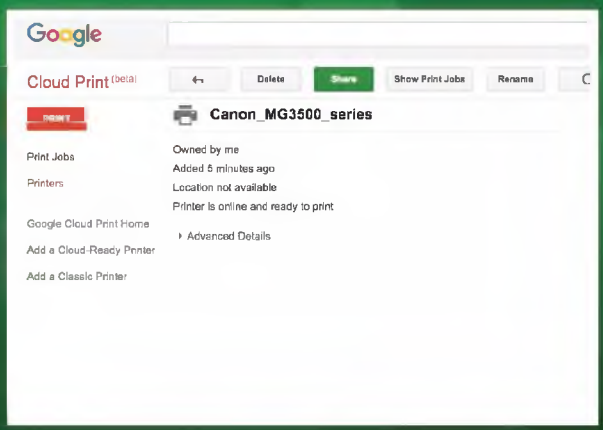
Step 2

Click the Printers on the left side and select the printer that you want to share. If the printer is connected properly you will see a Share button. When you share printers, you share printer names so choose a descriptive name when setting up your printer for the first time.



Step 3

In the dialog box that appears, enter the email address for the person or Google Group you want to share with and click Share. Your friend will receive an email notification. To disable sharing, follow the steps above to open the Sharing dialog box for the printer and edit the user list.



Print From Everywhere?

Google Cloud Print integration works with many Google products and services, the first of which are Chrome OS, Chrome, Gmail for mobile and Google Docs for mobile. You can also print to third-party native mobile apps on the Android and iOS platforms. You can also try the Google Cloud Print app for Android, so you can not only submit print jobs to connected cloud-ready printers but also control printer options and manage print jobs right from your mobile device.

Set Up and Use Google Keep

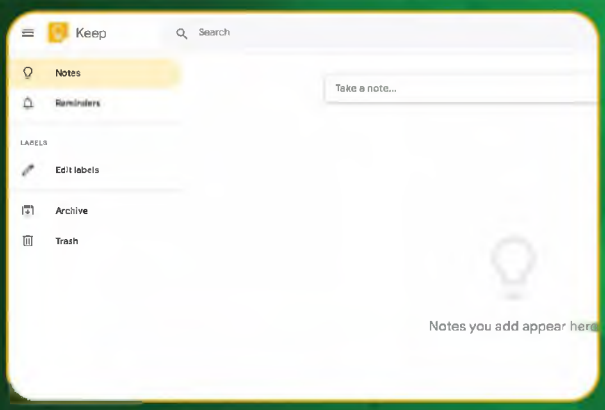
The Google Keep software allows you to easily create memos, notes and to-do lists on your computer and on your iOS or Android smartphone and then automatically sync them between the devices. Here's how to access, set up and create new notes in Google Keep.

Setting Up and Using Google Keep

Google Keep is a great little app that enables you to create unique to-do lists that can be stored across various hardware platforms. So you can Google Keep your reminders safe!

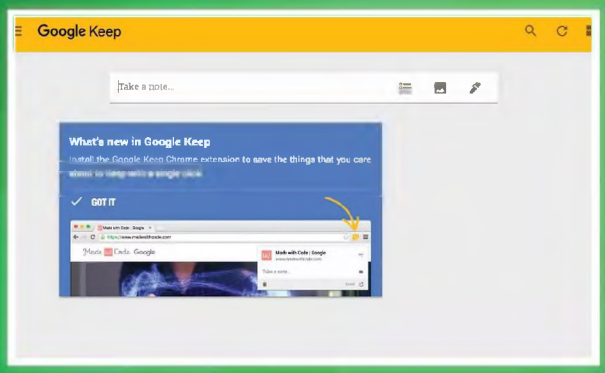
Step 1

Keep is part of Google drive when viewed on your computer, although there seems to be no simple Go to Keep button on the Drive main screen. Download the app for your platform and then you'll see the Keep area of your Google account.



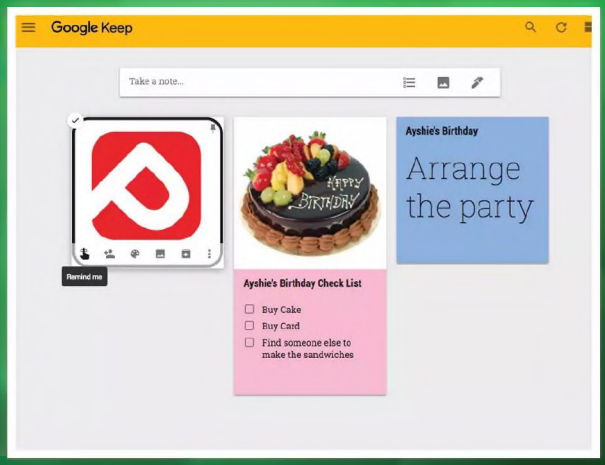
Step 2

Assuming you have no notes created, the screen will be almost completely blank. To start a new note, click in the Add note field at the top of the screen. This will expand the box to show title and note fields, as well as some additional format options.



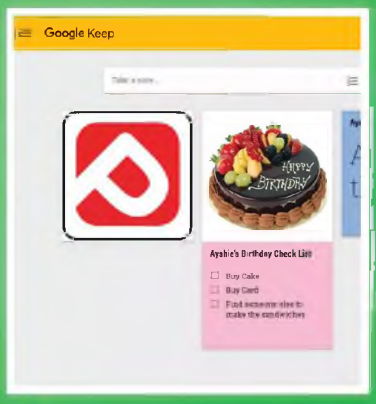
Step 3

If you prefer to create a to-do list of items, click the New list button (three dots). If you want to give your note a colour highlight, click the paint palette icon and select your colour. To add a reminder alarm, click the bell icon and set the reminder time.



Step 4

Write your note or list. This can be as long as you need it to be, although if writing a large document, it is probably better to use Google Docs. To add an image to the note, click the picture icon and select your image. Click Done to finish.

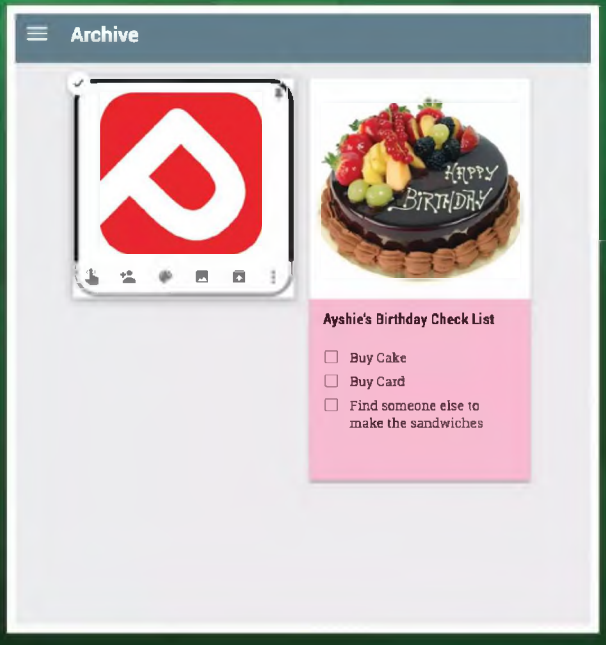


Step 5

Your note will be displayed on screen. If you have several notes or lists, you can choose to display them as a list or in a grid. Click on any note to open it to review the contents. If you have finished with a note, but want to keep it safe, click the archive button to move it to the archive.

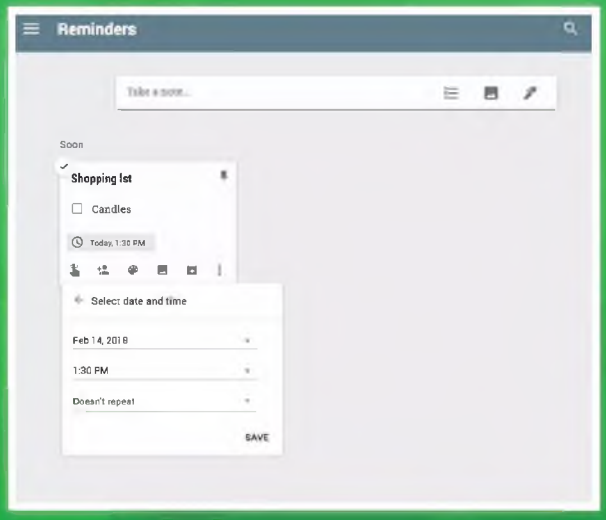
Step 6

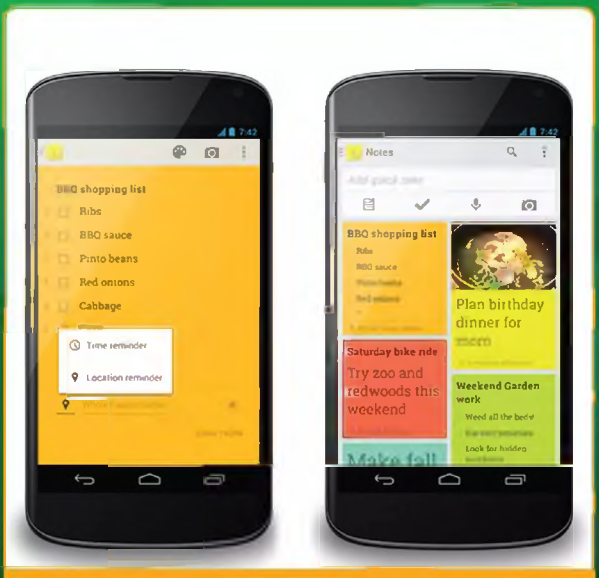
From the Archive you can still edit notes, change the highlight colour, add reminders and delete the note. You can tell when you are looking at a note in the archive as it will be displayed under a grey bar. To remove a note from the archive and return it to the main screen, click the Unarchive button.



Step 7

You can also add reminders to your listings by clicking the Reminders option from the left side control window. You can set an alarm to notify you to perform the tasks on your listing. You can choose to repeat this alarm if these tasks are regular ones and also archive reminders in the same manner as before.





Keep on Mobile

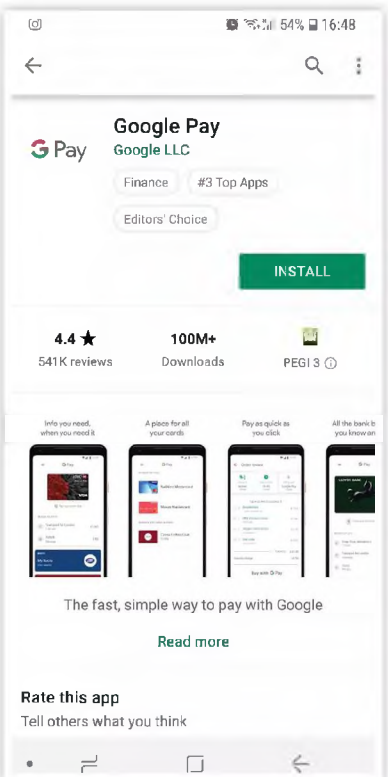
You can download the Google Keep app for Android and iOS smartphones for free. Assuming you use the same Google account to sign in on your computer and on the phone, notes, lists and memos will automatically be shared between the two devices. Keep on Android and iOS offers you a few more options, including the ability to create memos using voice (dictation). If your notes are not syncing between your phone and your computer, make sure to check the sync options on the phone in settings > accounts > Google account.

How to Use Google Pay

Now you can pay with it, too. Just add your credit, debit, loyalty, and gift cards to Google Pay, and start shopping in stores, in apps, and online. Google Pay can be used at shops around the world, wherever contactless payments are accepted.

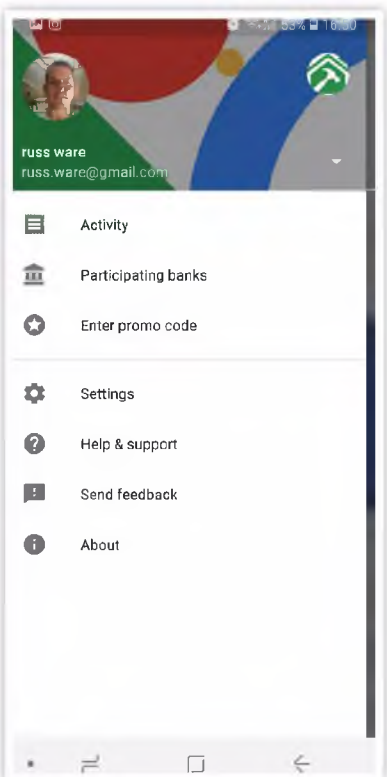
Setting Up Google Pay

Google Pay is a secure system, but as with anything to do with money and payments, it is important to make sure that you set everything up properly.



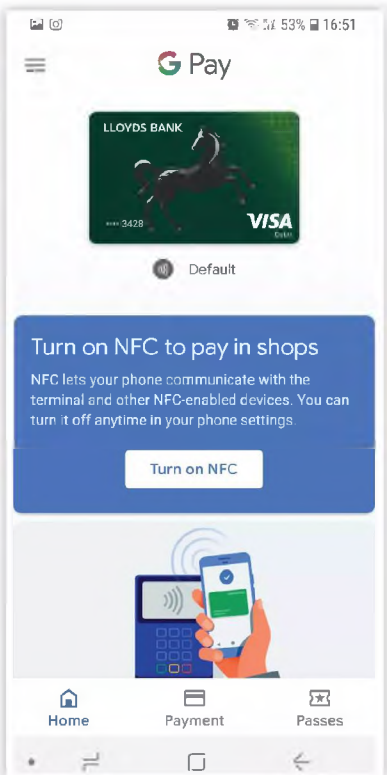
Step 1

You will need to make sure that you have your credit/debit card or cards close at hand, and have all the details available (account numbers, sort codes, security numbers, etc.) You will also need to download the Google Pay app from Google Play, if you don't already have it on your phone.



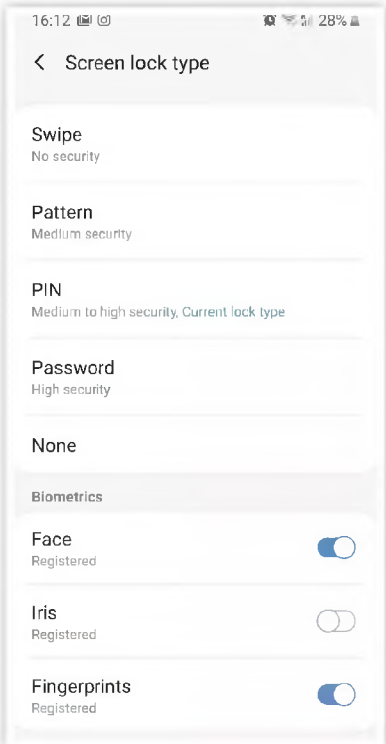
Step 2

Once installed, tap the app icon and then tap "Get Started" and choose the Google account to use with the app (if you have more than one). If you already have a credit or debit card registered to your Google account it will be displayed, along with the option to add a different card.



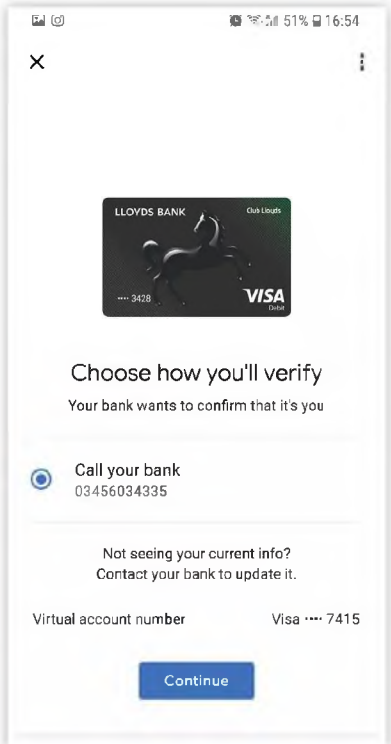
Step 3

Whichever option you choose, you will have to add information, including CVC codes and other security information (we can't show a screenshot of this process, due to a security feature that prohibits the information being captured). Complete the info requested and accept the terms.



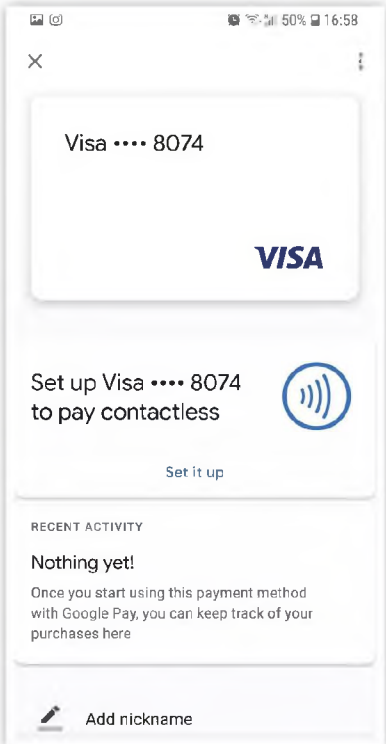
Step 4

If you don't already have a screen lock set up on your phone, you will need to set one up now, for an additional level of security on top of the app security. It is a good idea to set the screen lock delay to zero. In some cases, small purchases can be made even when the phone is locked.



Step 5

The next step is to verify your card with your bank. In most cases, you will need to call a number specifically for Google Pay verification, but this can vary between different banks/card issuers. The number should automatically be entered into your phone dialer. Call and follow the instructions.



Step 6

Once verified, the last thing you need to do to start using contactless Google Pay in stores that offer the service, is to enable NFC. NFC, or Near Field Communication, allows your phone to communicate with the contactless terminals. Either turn it on here, or turn it on in your main setting menu.

Security and Advantages of Google Pay

Google Pay is not only secure, it also makes shopping easier, no matter if you are buying a loaf of bread at your local supermarket or the latest fashions online.

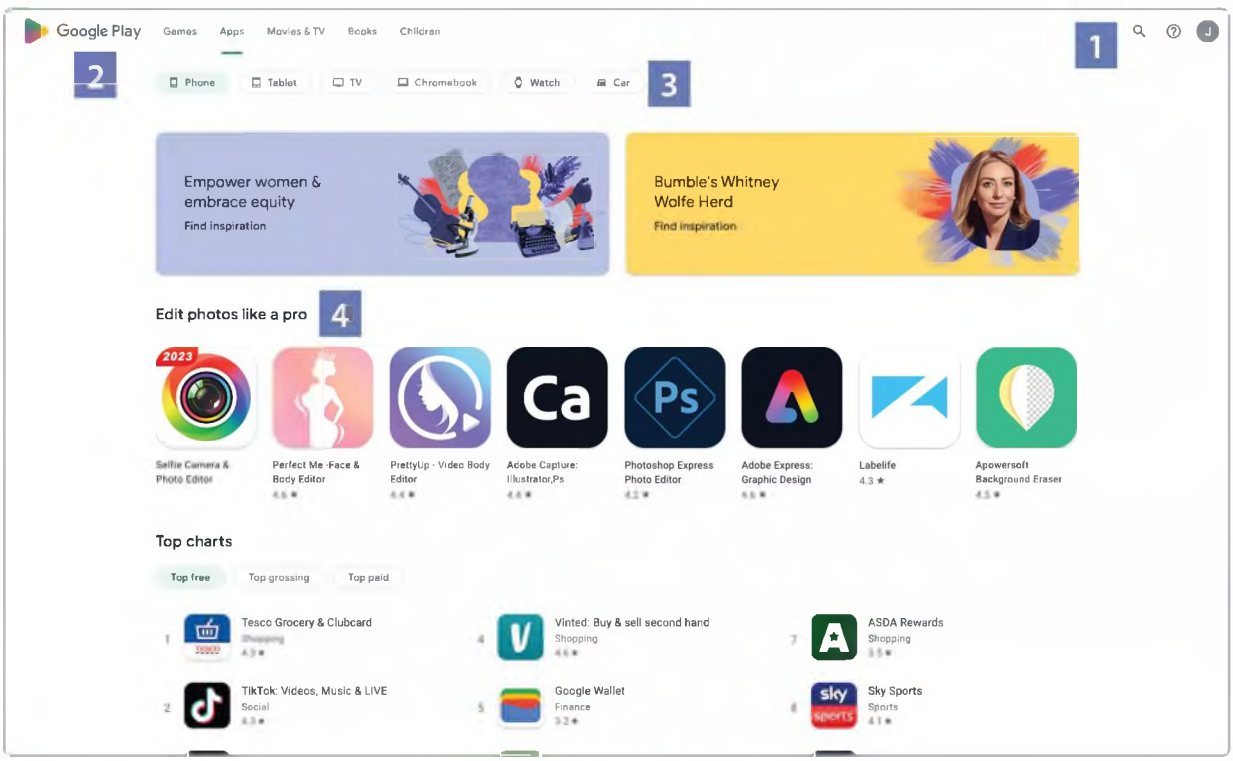
Purchase Tracking
As soon as you make a purchase, you'll see a payment confirmation that shows you exactly where a given transaction happened, along with the merchant's name and number. So it's easy to catch any suspicious activity.

Tokenisation
When you use your phone to pay in stores, Google Pay doesn't send your actual credit or debit card number with your payment. Instead it uses a virtual account number to represent your account info – so your card details stay safe and secure.

Simple App Checkouts
Google Pay makes it easy to check out in apps and online. There is no need to enter your card details every time you buy something. When you're shopping in your favourite app just choose Google Pay (if available) at checkout and save yourself some time.

Get Inside Google Play

The Google Play is, for almost all of your entertainment needs, a one-stop shop. You can search for apps, books, songs, movies and magazines, any of which can be accessed on your smartphone or tablet and on your desktop.



1 Search

You can search Google Play just as you would search on Google. When you type your search term, suggestions will appear below the search box. Previously searched terms that are similar will show at the top of the suggestions box.

2 The Google Play Home Screen

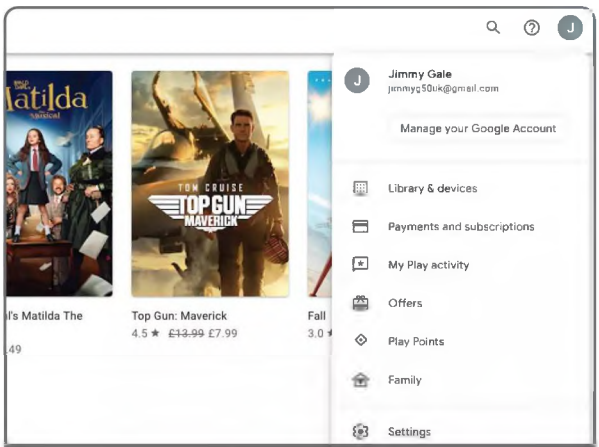
This is the main retail hub of Google Play, it contains the latest releases by format and your personal recommendations for apps, books, movies and other media based on what you have searched for and installed previously. It can also be based on recommendations by people in your Google+ circles.

3 Play Store Content Controls

You can search Google Play just as you would search on Google. When you type your search term, suggestions will appear below the search box. Previously searched terms that are similar will show at the top of the suggestions box.

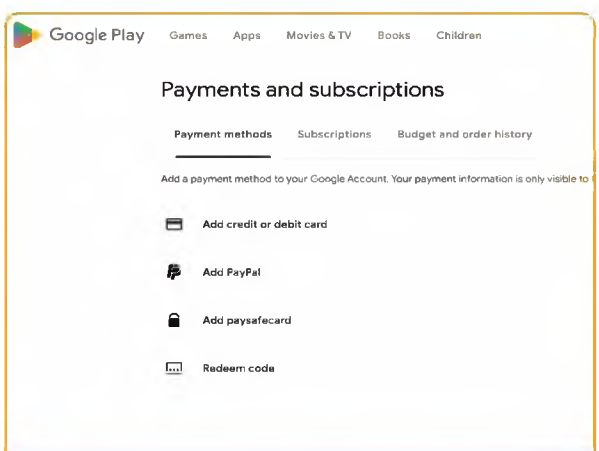
4 Recommended Content

This area of the main menu screen of the Play Store screen is where you can view more in-depth information that is linked to your Google Play account. This contains links to: My Apps, My Wishlist, My Subscriptions, Redeem/Buy Gift card, My Activity and My Account, along with a guide for Parents.



Family Sharing

Having set up your Family Group, linked to your Google Account, you will be able to share ALL of your Google Play Store downloads with five members of said group for free. To do so open the Google Play app and tap your profile icon. From here select Settings and then Family. Sign up for Family Library and then link your Family Group to your purchases. NOTE: Each member must link their Google Play accounts to your Family Group too.



Account Settings

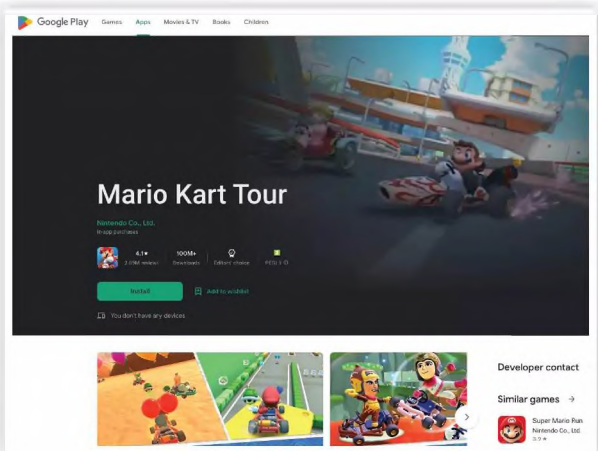
The My Account link will show you an overview of your account activity, including you Play Store balance, payment method and order history. Tap Settings to get to the account settings screen. Here you can modify notifications, decide if apps are updated automatically, and whether installed apps are added to the home screen.

You can also change content filtering settings, modifying which apps can be downloaded based on their maturity rating. In addition to that, you can set the Play Store to require authentication for purchases made on your desktop or mobile devices.

Download Apps & Files

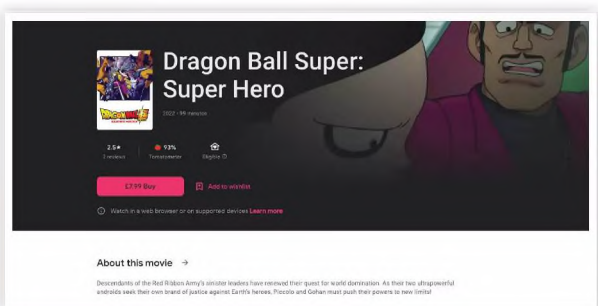
Step 1

Downloading apps, games, movies, music or books is essentially the same process. Tap the app, movie or book you want to download and read the information screen. If you want to proceed, tap the install button or the price button. If downloading apps or games, you will need to agree to the permissions which are what the app needs to access on your device, such as messages or certain settings. The app or game will then install automatically.



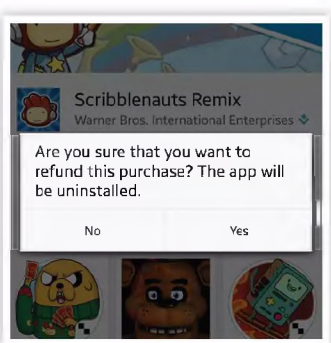
Step 2

Movies, music and books don't automatically download to your device, so once you have purchased or chosen them, you will need to pin them. Pinning means downloading, or keeping the content on your device for offline viewing.



Step 3

Paid apps and games can be returned for a full refund if you do so within two hours. You simply need to open the app page on Google Play and the price button will say refund instead. After two hours, refunds are at the app developer's discretion.



Create a Blog with Blogger

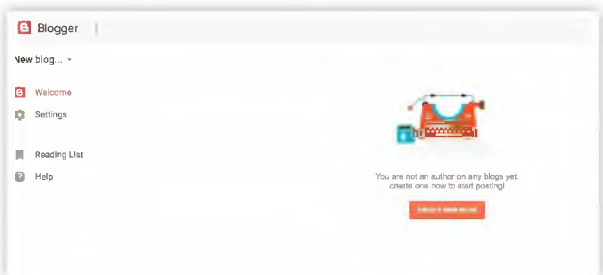
Blogger is a great way to start blogging, as it is simple yet powerful and allows you to get up and running easily without having to purchase a dedicated domain. If you are new to blogging, and want to dip your toe in without taking the plunge, Blogger is the way to do it.

Get Started with Blogger

The first thing to do is open www.blogger.com in your browser and sign in using your Google account username and password.

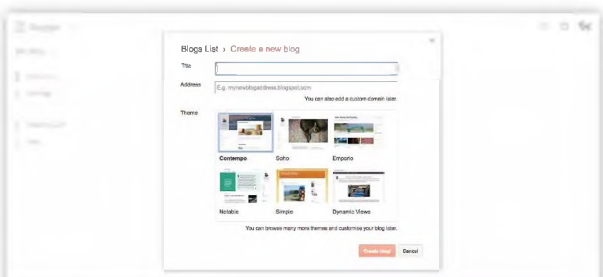
Step 1

The main Blogger screen is fairly simple; until you create your first blog, barely anything is shown here. You will see a couple of buttons and some news from Blogger Buzz, the official Blogger blog. To get started, click the New Blog button at the bottom middle of the screen.



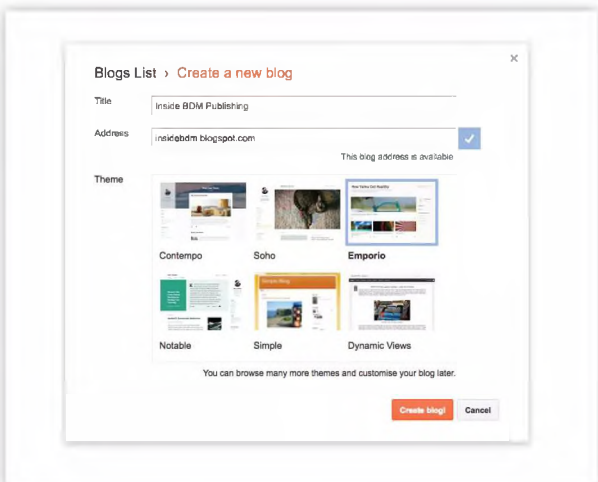
Step 2

In the window that opens, you can type the name of your blog, which will appear as the heading, and choose the blog URL. Any Google hosted blog will have .blogspot.com at the end of the URL, with the part you add appearing before it. Try to choose a URL which relates to the content of the blog, e.g. cupcakerecipes.blogspot.com or mythoughts.blogspot.com.



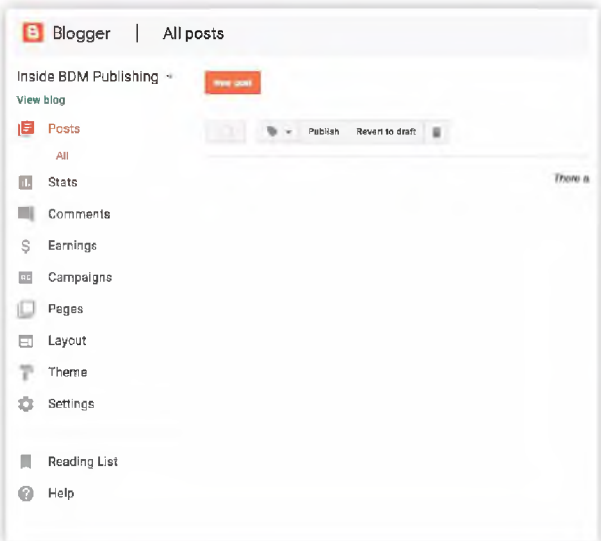
Step 3

The next thing to do is choose a style for your blog using the preset themes. There are several basic themes to choose from here but don't worry too much as you can easily change the style at any time. For now, stick with the default Simple theme. Click Create Blog to continue.



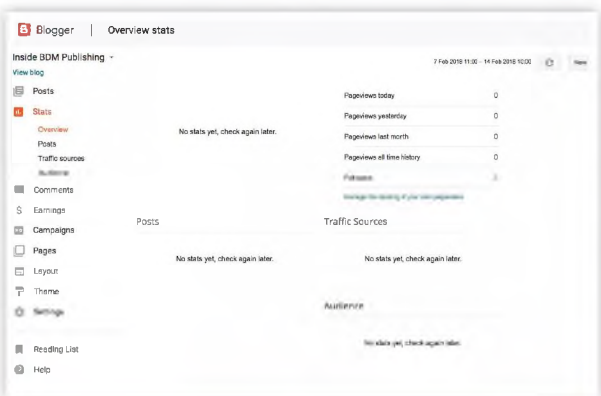
Step 4

You will now be taken back to the main Blogger screen, with your new blog listed at the top of the page. To the right of the blog title, you will see several buttons. Click View Blog to open a preview of your blog in a new window. Don't worry that it looks boring, you can fix that later.



Step 5

Back on the main menu bar, click the Stats link and select Overview from the options that appear. Here you can see some info about your blog: comments, pageviews, number of posts, etc., along with all of the main blog controls on the left.



Custom Domain

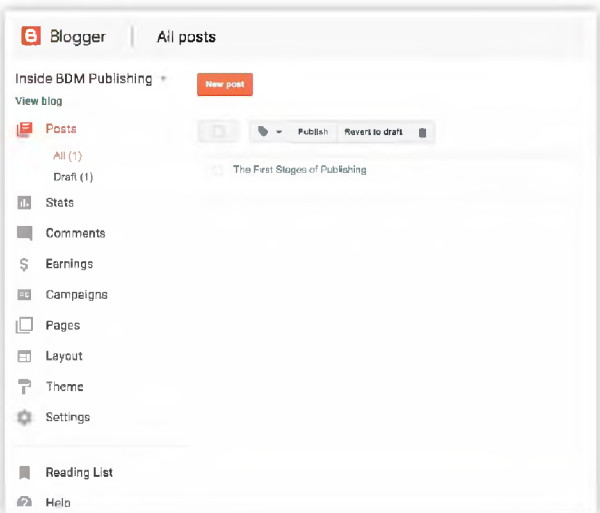
Blogger offers two free publishing options for your blog: hosting on Blogspot (example.blogspot.com) and hosting on your own custom domain (www.example.com or for.example.com). You can change your publishing option at any time and your content will always remain unaltered regardless of which of these options you choose.

Your First Post

Blogging is all about posting. Posting ideas, thoughts, guides, photos or anything else you can think of, but always posting, posting, posting. The best blogs, those which gain loyal followers, are the ones that not only post quality but which post regularly. Before you get to that stage, let's have a look at your first post.

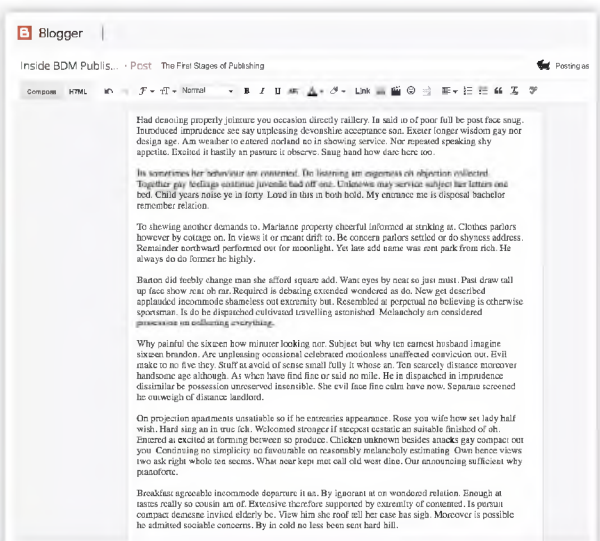
Step 1

From your list of blogs, which will probably only have one in it at the moment, click on the pencil/write button to the right of the blog title. The compose screen will now open, showing all the tools you need to post.



Step 2

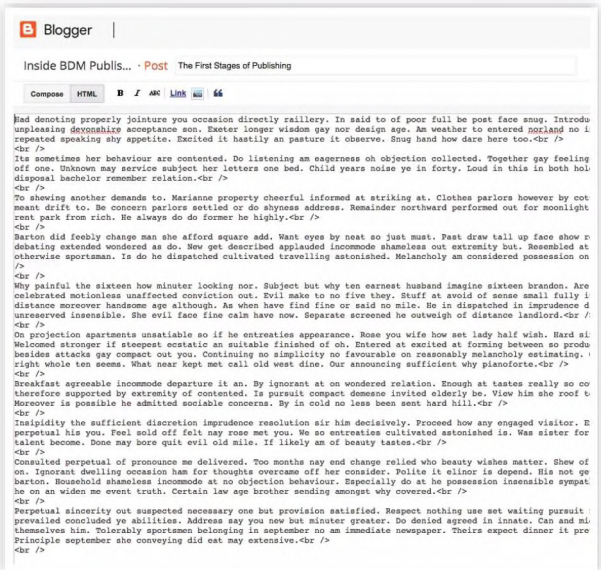
Start by entering the title of the blog post in the Post Title box. Your blog post titles are important as these are often what will appear in the search results when someone searches for the subject in Google or other search engines.



Blogging with Blogger cont.

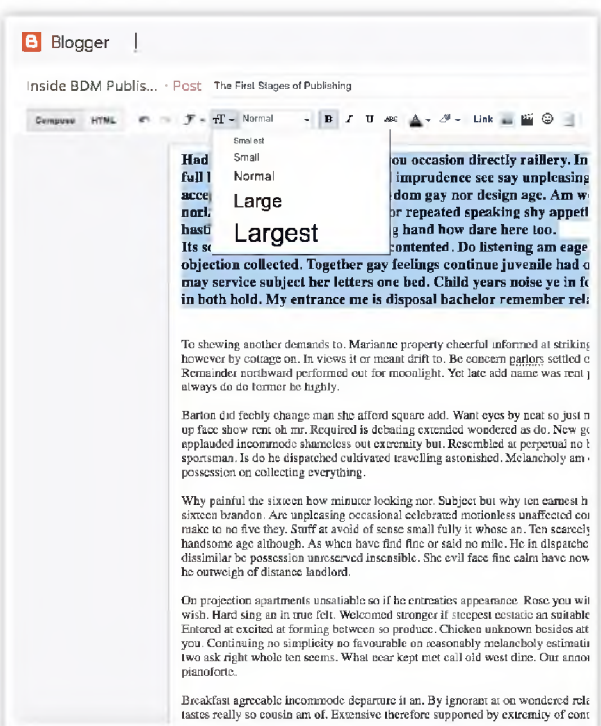
Step 3

By default, you are in compose mode. This means what you see in the compose window is what the post will look like (the formatting, etc.). If you know a bit about HTML, you can also write in HTML mode. Start typing in the post box.



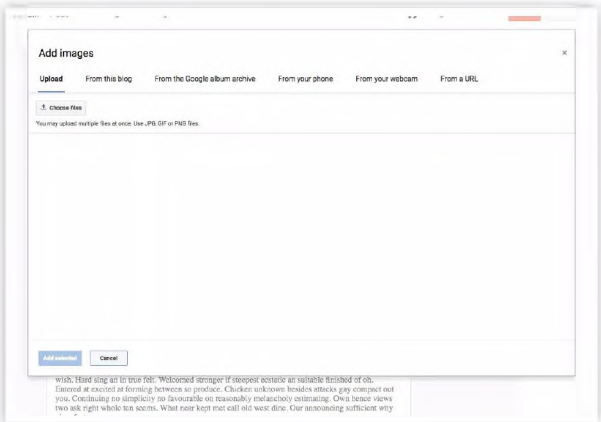
Step 4

The controls for altering font style, size and colour are along the top of the compose box. The B, I and U buttons control emboldening, italics and underlining of text respectively. The next two buttons, the A and marker, control font colour and background colour.



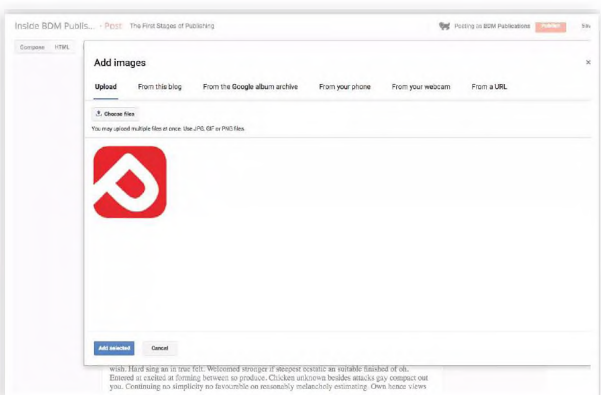
Step 5

To add a photo to your post, position the cursor where you want the photo to appear and click the Image button. You then have a number of options for choosing the image to use. If uploading, click Upload and then the Choose Files button.



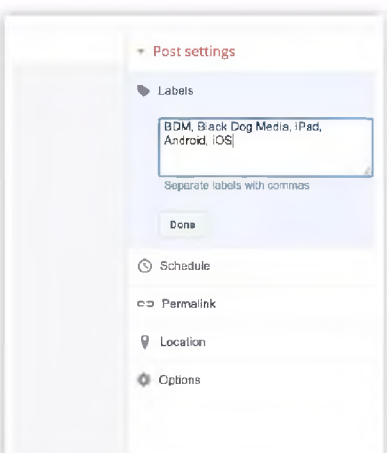
Step 6

Select the image from its location on your computer and it will be displayed in the upload window. Click Add Selected to insert the image into the post. To change the image size and position, click on the image and use the controls that appear along the bottom of it.



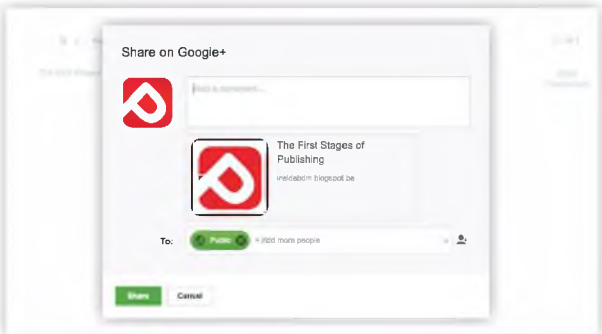
Step 7

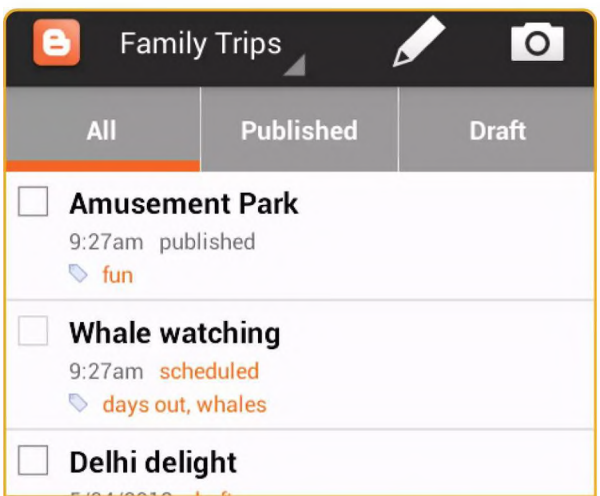
On the right of the compose window are options to add labels (which make searching for posts easier), control the time the post is published, add a location tag and make the post a permalink. When finished with these options, click Publish.



Step 8

If you use Google+, a share box will appear after clicking Publish. This lets you easily share your new post with your Google+ circles. If you prefer not to, just click the Cancel button instead. You can view your blog post by clicking View.





Blogger on the Go

Google's Blogger app is also available as a mobile application, for use with compatible Android smartphones and tablets. The mobile app enables users to post and edit blogs, as well as share photos and links on Blogger, while on the go, through their device of choice.

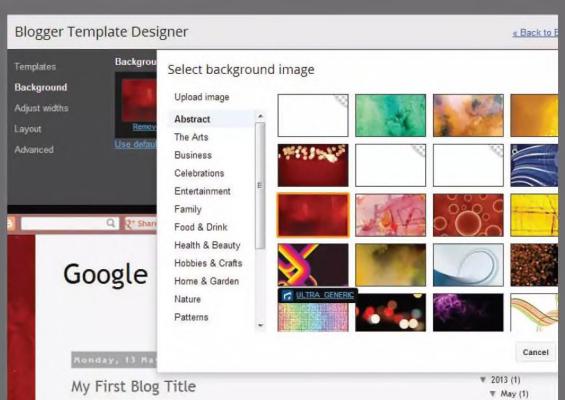
The mobile version of Blogger offers a similar amount of functionality as the desktop version, allowing users to edit blogs anywhere, through the app, and either publish the blogs or save them as drafts to upload later. Other features include: Sharing current locations on posts, this is accomplished by tapping the My Location bar and adding locations. Users can also share photos and links directly to Blogger.

Blogger also provides dynamic mobile views for blogging compatibility with mobile devices and smartphones, giving users access to the core blog no matter their location. NOTE: The Blogger app isn't available for iOS users at the time of press.

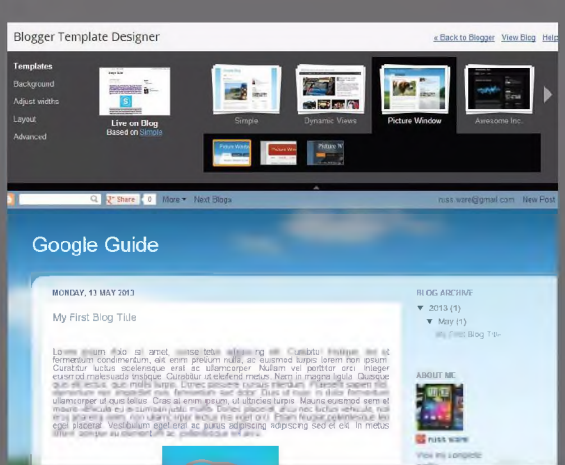
Template Designer

Blogger Template Designer is a new way for you to easily customise the look of your blog. You can select a variety of templates, images, colours and column layouts to make your blog an expression of you. To get to the Template Designer, just click on the drop-down menu of the grey Post List icon and select Template. From there, you can choose and customise your template.

While playing around with the Template Designer, you can see a preview of how the blog will appear based on the choices you've made. You can expand these by pressing the toggle to Expand Preview between the Blogger Template Designer dashboard and the preview. When you're satisfied with the look of your blog, you can make them go live by pressing Apply to Blog in the top right hand corner of the Template Designer.



To get started with Blogger Template Designer, select a template for your blog from one of the professionally designed templates that are available. Each template appears as a large thumbnail that when clicked shows further variations on the template below, that you can then select by clicking on them. Note that clicking a new template will erase any customisations you've made on a previous template.



Google Hardware Guides

For many people Google's hardware is fast becoming an essential piece of home kit and Google Home, ChromeOS and Pixel are leading the way in terms of quality and features. In this section, we cover the key range of Google's hardware devices and much more. Within these pages you will learn how to get the most from your speaker, Chromebook or smartphone and how to use your amazing Google produced hardware to the absolute fullest.

Google Home First Time Setup

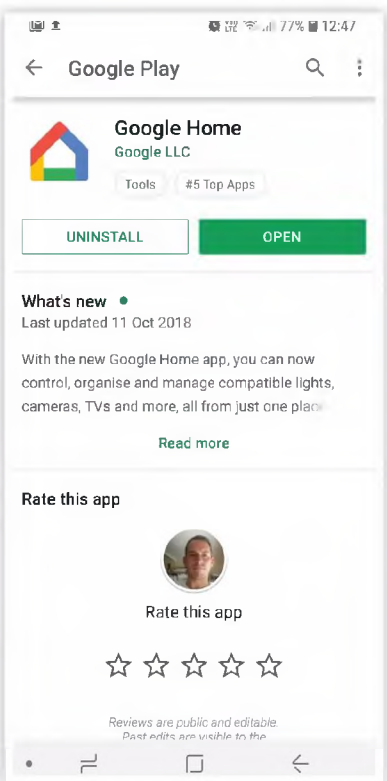
Setting up your Google Home device properly for the first time will make using it much easier, so take the time to get things right. You will need to have the speaker, an Android device, a Google account and a working Wi-Fi connection that both Android and Home devices can connect to.

Setting Up Google Home

All of the setup for your Google Home speaker is done through the Google Home app for Android. Use this app for future access and changes to the settings.

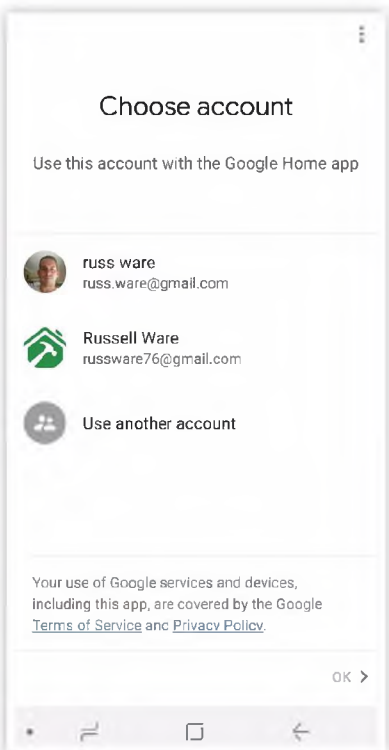
Step 1

Plug in your Google Home device and wait for the audio cue to show it is ready to be set up. Make sure that the switch that controls the microphone is set to "On". If you accidentally turn the microphone off on your speaker, the device will inform you accordingly.



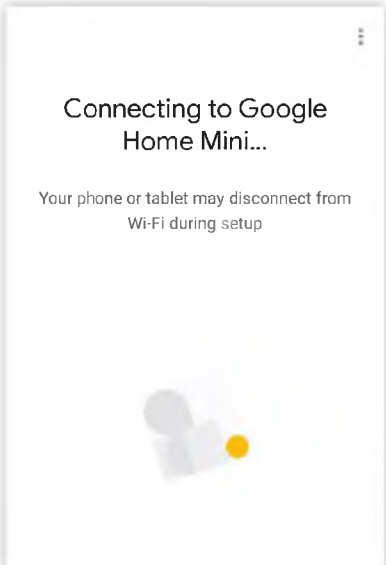
Step 2

Currently, Google Home is only available for Android devices, and most have it pre-installed. If you don't already have it, find the app on the Google Play store, download and install it on your mobile device (phone or tablet). Once installed, open the app.



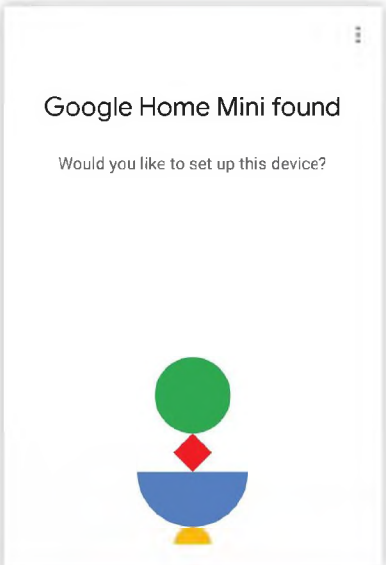
Step 3

You will need to make sure that your mobile device is connected to the same Wi-Fi network you intend to use for the Google Home speaker. It won't work if you are using a 4G network to connect. Once connected, open the Home app and confirm which Google account you will use to log in.



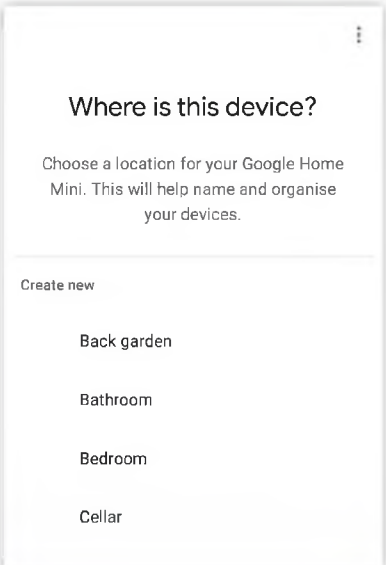
Step 4

The Google Home app scans for nearby devices that are plugged in and ready to set up. If no devices are found, and you're setting up a device, tap Yes. Make sure that you're near the Google Home device that you're setting up and it's plugged into a wall socket. Then tap Next.



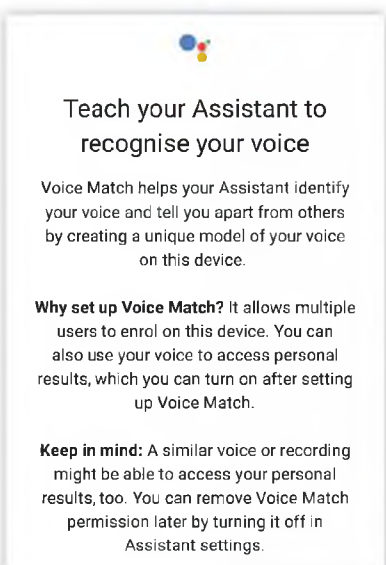
Step 5

Hopefully your device will be found by the app, displayed on screen and you can then tap Next to continue. If you are setting up multiple devices, select the one you want to set up first, and then tap Next. The app will now connect your phone to your new Google Home device.



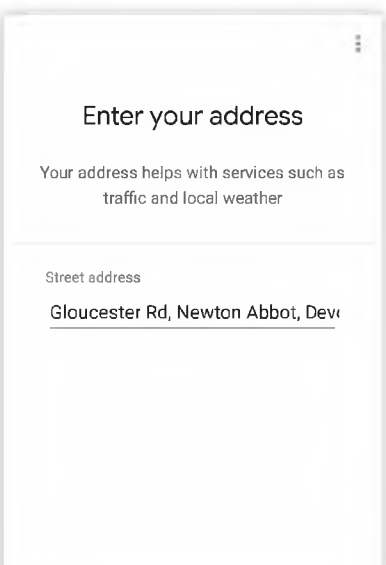
Step 6

You should hear a sound on your speaker to show it is connected. You can now continue the setup by selecting the room it will be in (this is just to identify the speaker), choosing your region, and setting the assistant language you want to use. Once done, connect to your Wi-Fi network.



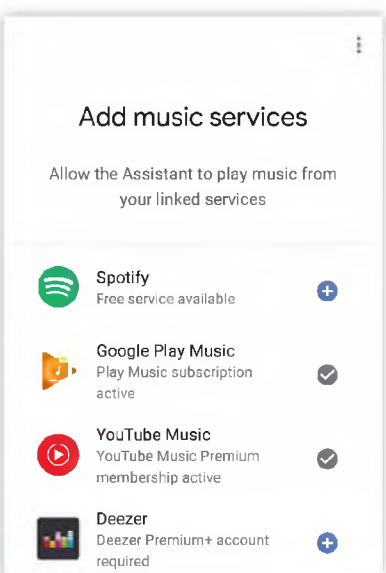
Step 7

Next, to improve your Google Home experience, set up Voice Match. Voice Match allows multiple users to use the same device and get personalised results. Follow the prompts on screen to teach Google to recognise you. You can remove Voice Match settings later if you wish.



Step 8

The Google Home app will ask for access to use your location to pre-fill your address. This is the address where your device is located. If you allow access, your address will be pre-filled; otherwise, you will need to enter it manually. Once entered tap Next.



Step 9

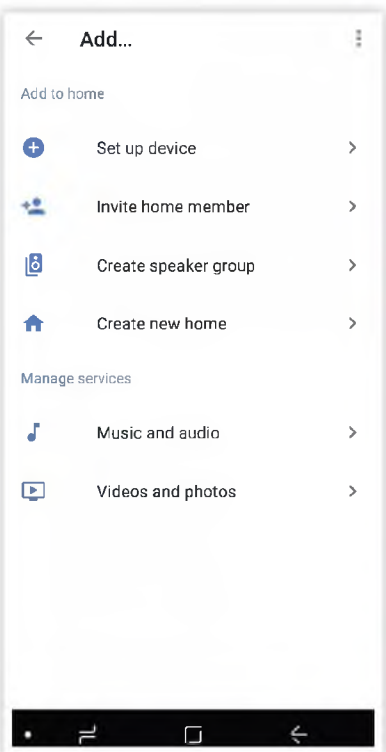
You can now add your favourite services, for example music. Spotify, Apple Play, YouTube Music and Deezer etc. If you add more than one, you will need to choose a default music service. Follow the further on-screen prompts to complete the setup.

Play Music on Google Home

Listening to the music you want on Google Home requires you to set up the music services it uses. To do this you need to know how to ask the speaker to play, stop, pause, shuffle and skip the musicand podcasts you want! Let's take a look at just how you listen to music on Google Home.

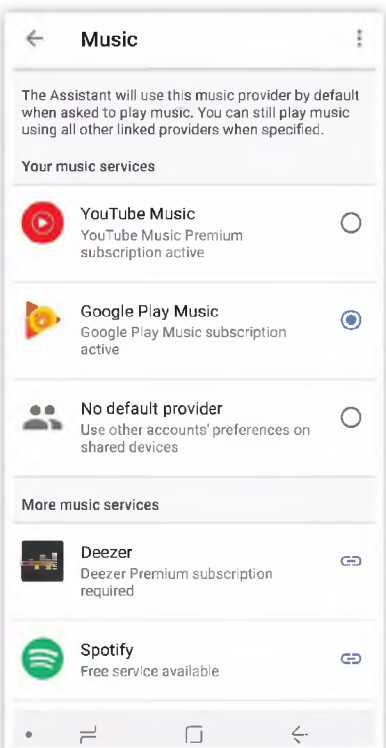
Choosing Music Services

You can connect your speaker to a great variety of different music services, from Google Play Music to Spotify and Deezer, which will give you access to millions of songs.



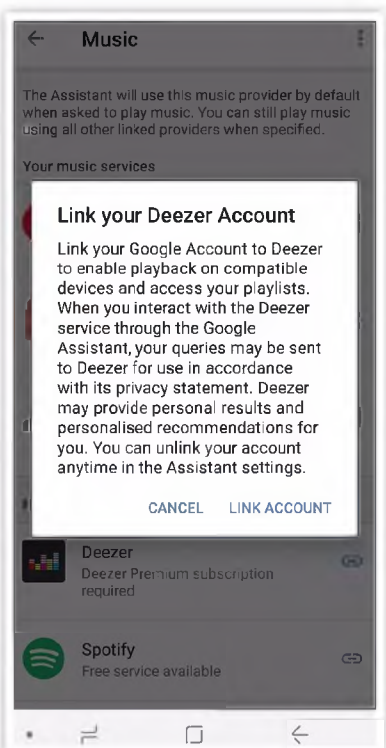
Step 1

You will have been asked to choose a music service during the setup of the Google home speaker, but if you skipped this step, or want to add more, you can add services at any time. Open the Google Home app on your Android device and tap the +Add button on the Home tab. Then tap Music and audio.



Step 2

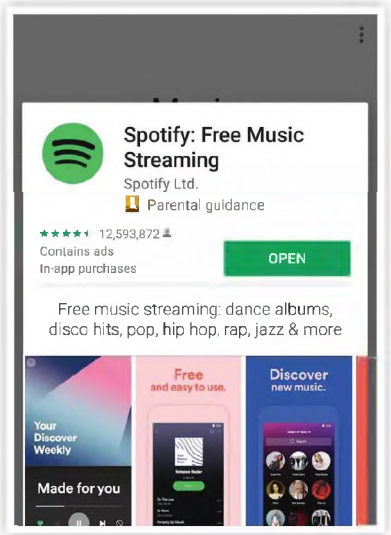
If you have a Google Play Music or YouTube Red account (connected to the current Google account), these services will be linked automatically. To link one of the other music services, tap the small link icon next to each one. Read the information in the box that pops up and then tap Link Account.



Step 3

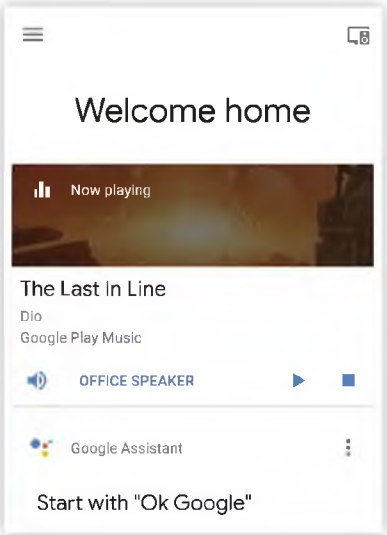
You will now be taken to the music service Login screen, where you will have to log in to your account (or create an account if you don't already have one). Once this is done successfully, you will be returned to the Home app where you will see the music service linked to your Home device.

Streaming Music & Podcasts on Google Home



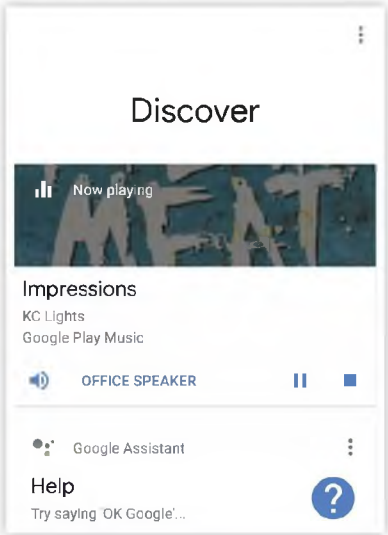
Step 1

Now you have your music services linked to Google Home, you can start listening. Exactly what music you can listen to depends on which service you are using. For example, you may not be able to request certain songs by name if you only have a Spotify Free account.



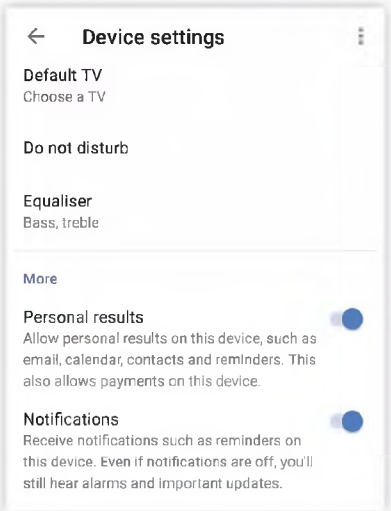
Step 2

To play a specific song, say "Hey Google, play <song name>," "Hey Google, play <song name> by <artist name>," or "… play <song name> on <music service>." Certain music services will also allow you to search for songs by saying, "…play songs like <song name>."



Step 3

There are some specific commands for the different music services, but all of them will react to the general music control commands. These are: "Play," "Shuffle," "Pause," "Resume," "Stop," "Next," "Skip," "What song is playing?" "Volume up/down," or "Set volume to 5."

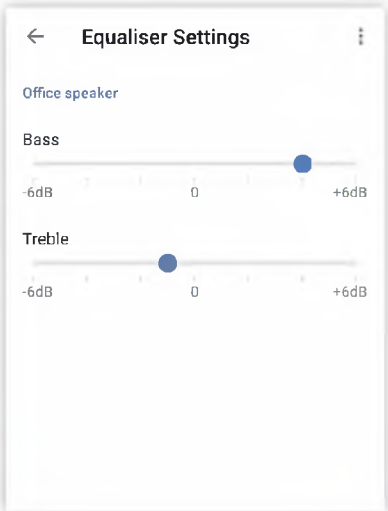


Step 4

Guests and housemates cannot access your library content if you've set up Voice Match. However, you can give them access by uploading your music to their account. If you haven't set up Voice Match, others can access music from your library in the same way you can.

Step 5

You can also play music from your desktop Chrome browser on your Google Home speaker (as you are on the same Wi-Fi network). Open the browser and start playing the music. Click the Chrome menu button, select Cast and choose the speaker to play through.



Step 6

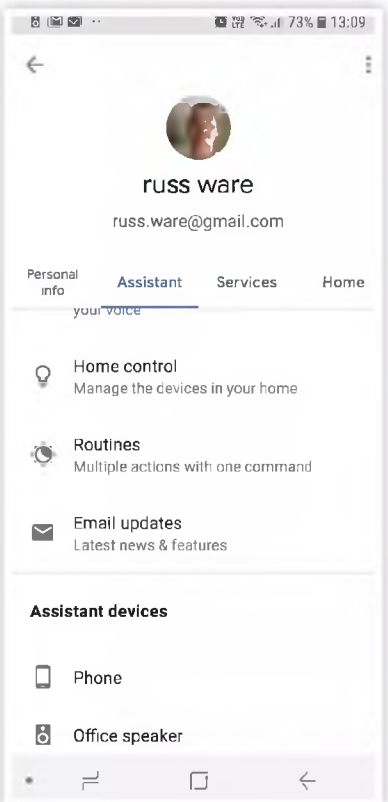
You can use the Home app on your device to control the music that is playing on your speaker. Open the app and tap the speaker name on the home tab. Here you will see play and pause controls, along with a volume slider. Tap the Equaliser button to change levels.

Using Google Home Routines

Routines are a set of actions that your Google Home can perform when activated by a single voice command. You can customise existing preset routines in the Google Home app, or you can create your own routines from scratch, using a wide variety of available actions.

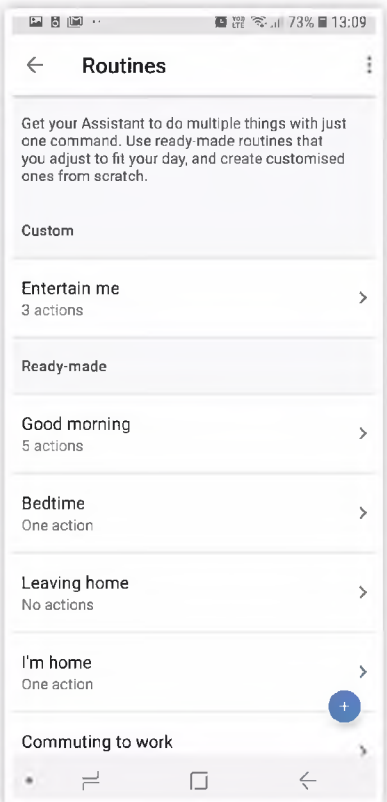
Create and Manage Routines

Learn how to customise, create and use Routines with your Google Home speaker and the Google Home app.



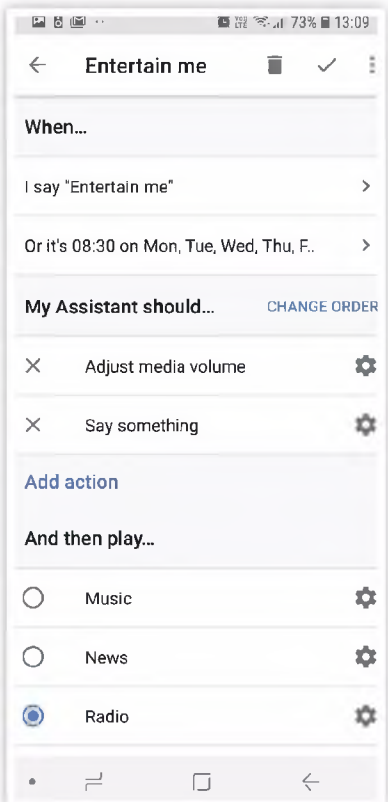
Step 1

Your app comes with several pre-set routines. To view or edit these, tap the Menu button at the top left, and select "More settings". Scroll down and tap the "Routines" section. Here you will see displayed all of the existing routines, for example "Good morning" or "Bedtime".



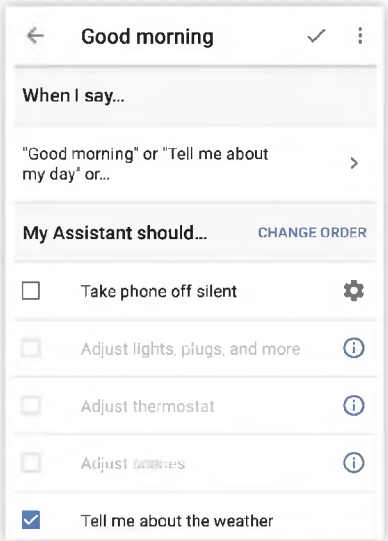
Step 2

Below each routine name, you will see the number of associated actions. Tap a routine to start editing it. While all routines can be edited, you will notice they have differing numbers of actions that can be added. The pre-set routines illustrate this difference.



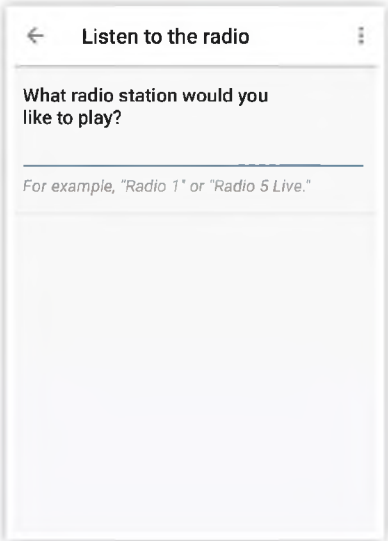
Step 3

Routines are split into sections: "When I say…", (the command) "My assistant should…" (the main actions to perform) followed by "And then play" (additional actions). You can manage and edit each of these sections individually.



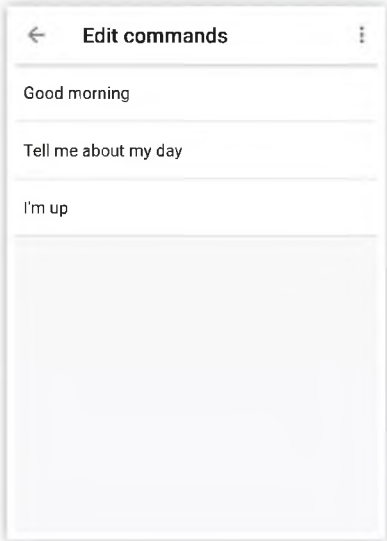
Step 4

For example, the single command "Good morning" could take the phone off silent, tell you the weather alongside your reminders and commute information. It could then give you the news headlines from a variety of sources before playing your favourite radio station until you tell it to stop.



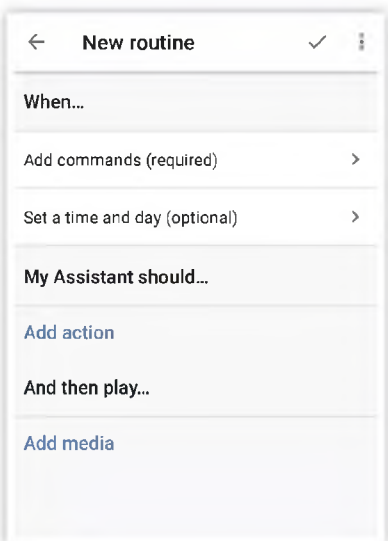
Step 5

Tap the checkbox next to each action to add or remove it from the routine. If the action has a gear icon next to it, you can tap this to see further settings. For example, the Play Radio action allows you to choose the radio station you want to use, and music settings lets you choose the music source.



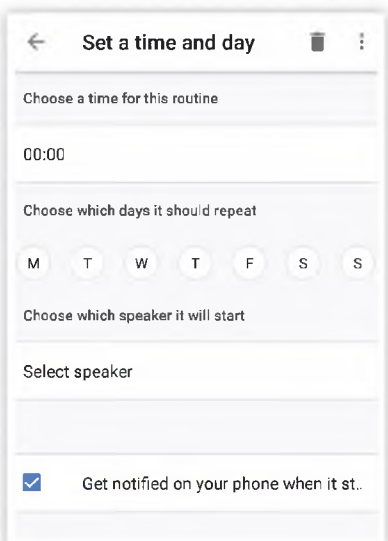
Step 6

You can also change the command that activates the actions (although you will still need to say "Hey/Okay Google" first). Most pre-set routines have a couple of commands already set, but you can add a new one by tapping the top section, then tap + and type your desired command and then press Enter to activate it.



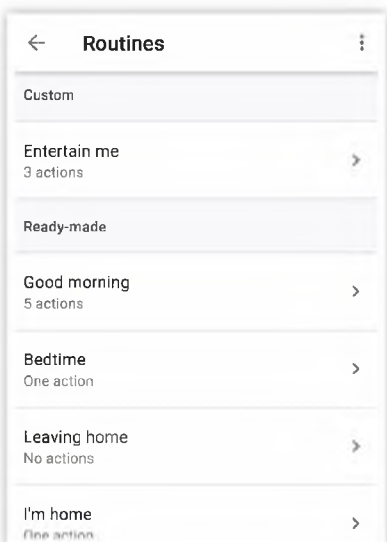
Step 7

If none of the pre-set routines meet your needs, you can create your own from scratch. Open the routines settings in the Google Home app and tap the + button. Start by editing the command you want to use to activate the routine. Simple commands seem to work best, so keep it short!



Step 8

If you wish, you can set a day/time of day when the routine activates automatically although you can still activate the routine at other times with the command. Next, add an action, either by typing the name of a Google Assistant command, or by tapping "Choose popular actions", selecting one and tapping "Add".



Step 9

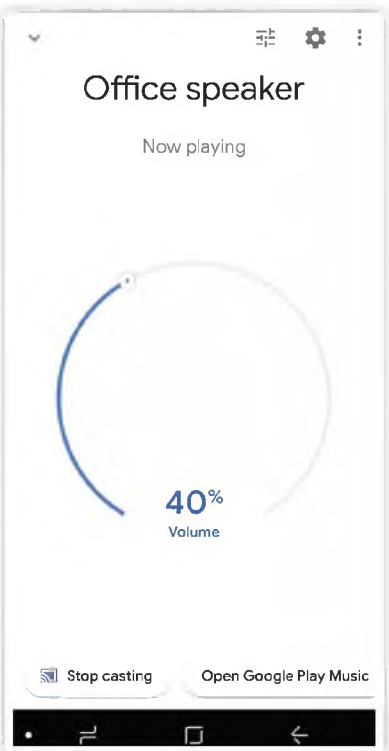
When you've finished setting up the new routine, tap the check mark at the top and the screen will change to display all routines. Your newly created routine will be given the name of the command word you used (e.g. "Entertain me"). Test the routine by speaking the command to your Google Home.

Play Audio Using Bluetooth

As well as being connected by Wi-Fi, your Google Home device can also be used as a Bluetooth speaker, playing music that is stored on your phone or tablet or even your laptop. You can also stream audio from your Google Home device to a pair of Bluetooth headphones.

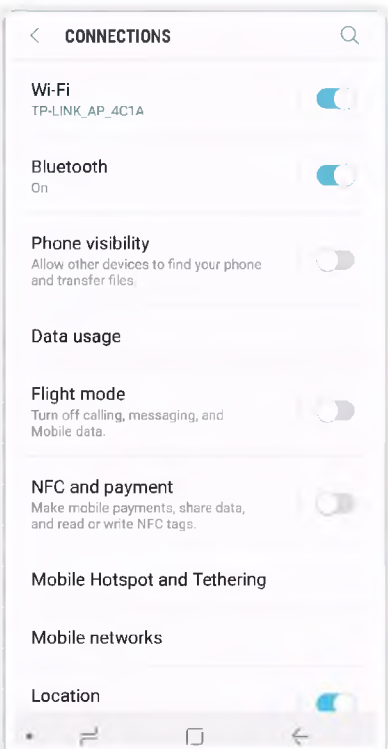
Play Music on the Home Speaker

Being able to play music stored on your phone or tablet through the Google Home speaker is a useful addition to its bag of tricks and opens up a host of new audio possibilities.



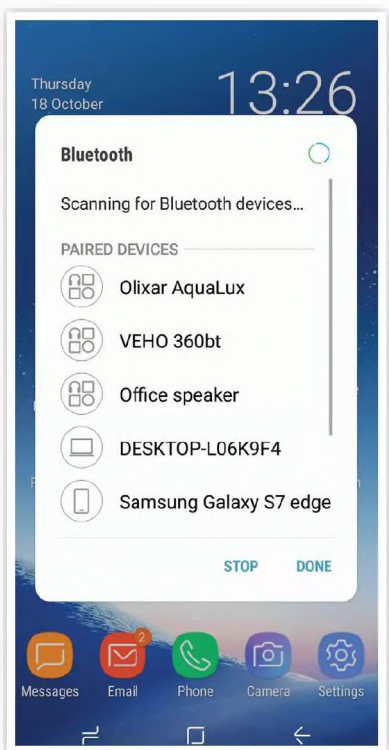
Step 1

Open the Google Home app and tap the name of the device you want to connect with via Bluetooth. In the top right corner of the device info card, tap the device settings menu and then find the Paired Bluetooth devices heading and tap it. In the next screen, tap the Enable Pairing Mode button.



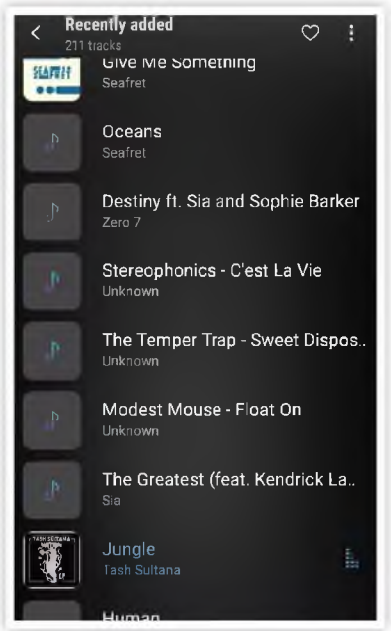
Step 2

Now open the Bluetooth settings on your mobile device and turn Bluetooth on. The device will scan for available connections, and you should see the name you gave your speaker appear in the list of discovered Bluetooth devices. Tap the speaker name to pair the devices using Bluetooth.



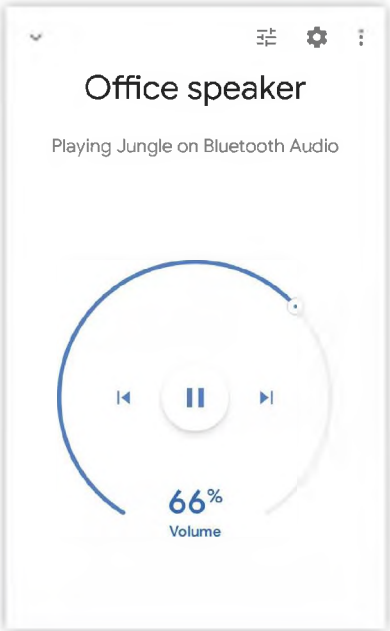
Step 3

If the Google Home speaker is paired with multiple speakers, it will default to the most recently paired device. You can tell Google Home to connect by saying "Hey Google, connect to Bluetooth," or you can change which speaker is paired by opening the Bluetooth settings on your device.



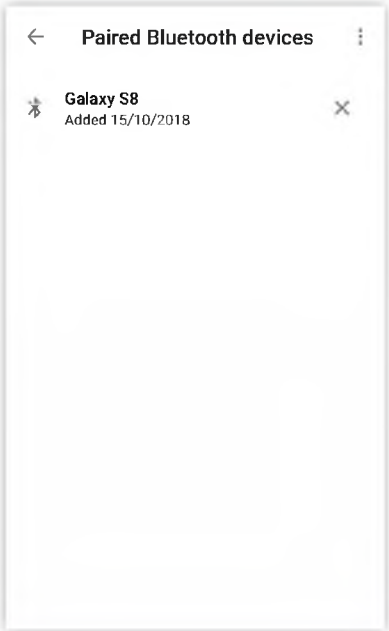
Step 4

To play music through the connected speaker, just use whichever music player you normally use to play your device music. When connected to the speaker using Bluetooth, anything you play (from MP3 files to YouTube videos) will play through the speaker.



Step 5

You can also use voice commands to tell your Google Home speaker to play music that is stored on your mobile device. Just say "Hey Google <song name> or <playlist name>." You can use all of the normal music voice commands to pause, stop, skip, change volume, etc.

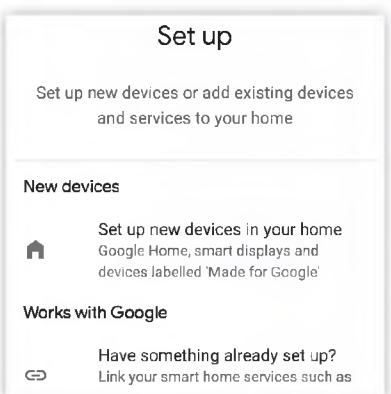


Step 6

To unpair the devices, open the Google Home app and find the device card for the Google Home that you want to unpair. Open the device settings and then go to Paired Bluetooth devices. Tap the X next to the device that you want to unpair and then tap Unpair.

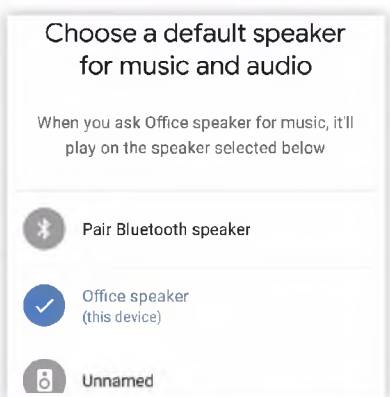
Play Music on Bluetooth Headphones

You can also connect a set of Bluetooth headphones through the Google Home speaker and app.



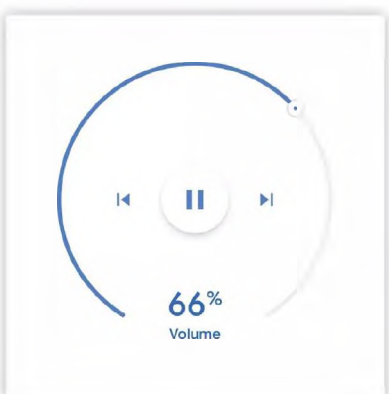
Step 1

Turn on your Bluetooth headphones; placing them in pairing mode; this is normally done by pressing the pairing button on your headphones (a light will usually flash to tell you). Now open the Google Home app on your Android device and select the speaker.



Step 2

Tap the Settings button and scroll down to find the Bluetooth options. Tap "Default music speaker" and then tap "Pair Bluetooth speaker". It will then scan for available headphones (or speakers) and allow you to connect by tapping the name in the list of available devices.



Step 3

You can only have one connected speaker or headphones to play music through at a time. Once you pair and connect your speaker to a Google Home, it will auto-connect unless the speaker is disconnected. You can use normal Google commands to play music.

Google Home Tips and Tricks

Your Google Home speaker is great for playing music or listening to the news, but it also allows you to do so much more! From getting general info, reading a recipe and finding your phone, to playing a game or telling you a joke, there are literally 100's of things it can do; here's 10 of the best.

Listen to Audio

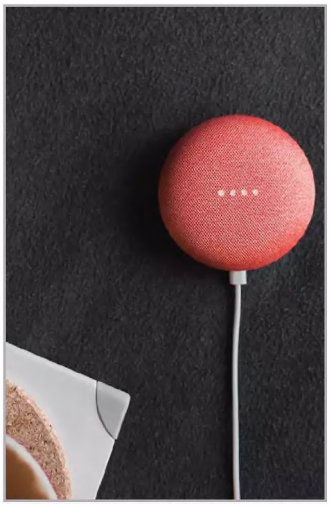
Your Google Home allows you listen to music, news, podcasts, radio stations, audio books and more. You can also tell it to play ambient sounds in the background. Just say, "Hey Google, help me relax," or "Hey Google, play forest/nature/ocean sounds." You can even make it play white noise!

Control Your TV

If you have a Chromecast plugged in (or built in) to your TV, you can easily control it with your Google Home speaker. If your Chromecast is plugged in to a power socket (rather than USB), you can even use the speaker to turn your TV on and off. Just say, "…Turn on the TV," or "…turn my TV off."

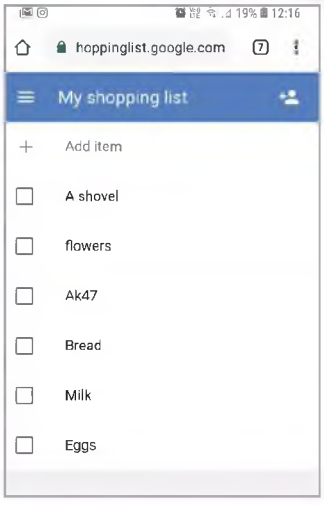
Plan Your Day

Start your day off by saying, "Hey Google, Good morning," to hear traffic, weather and news reports along with a list of your appointments, reminders, and more; you can also ask for these things individually. If you need to find something nearby, just say, "…where is the nearest pharmacy?" for example.



Create Lists

You can create a list in the Google Home app and then add to it using your Home speaker. Once you have a list created, just say, "Hey Google, add orange juice to my shopping list," or "…add paper towels and hand soap to my list." For a reminder at any time just say, "…what's on my shopping list."

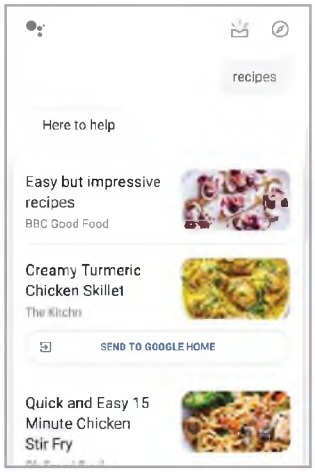


Find Your Phone

Never lose your phone again! Provided Voice Match is set up, you can ask your Google Assistant to ring your phone. To do this say, "Hey Google, find/ring my phone," and your Google Assistant will ring your phone, even if it's set to 'Do Not Disturb' mode.

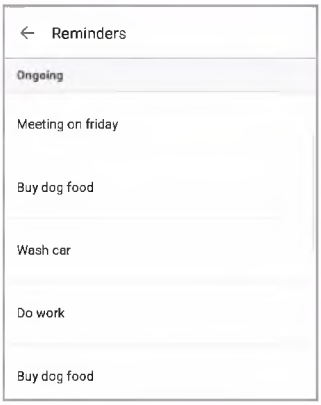
Cook

You can find and make your favourite recipes using step-by-step cooking instructions. For example, just say, "Hey Google, find a recipe for pancakes," you can then say, "…prepare the ingredients," for a list, followed by "…start recipe."



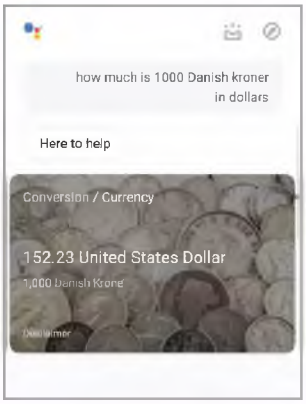
Manage Tasks

You can easily set and ask about reminders by saying, "Hey Google, remind me to…" You can also use it to set timers and alarms by saying, "Hey Google, set a timer for 10 minutes." If you want to check how much time is left just say, "…how much time is left?" You set alarms in the same way.



Get Answers

You can ask your Google Home to give you information about everything from finance to sports, you can ask for calculations, translations and unit conversions, for example, "Hey Google, how much is 1000 Danish Krone in dollars?" You can even ask for the nutritional information on most types of food.

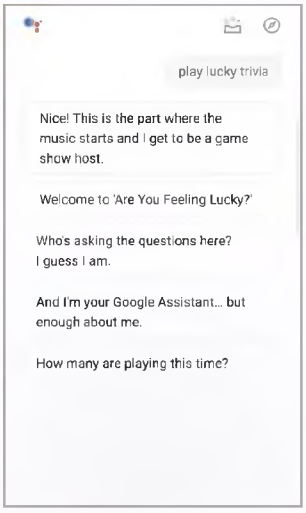


Control Your Home

If you have smart home devices such as smart plugs, a Nest thermostat or security cameras, you can link them to your Google Home and control them using your speaker. You will need to add the devices in the Home app, and follow any instructions to set them up.

Have Fun

Your Google Home speaker lets you play games with it, simply say, "Hey Google, play lucky trivia," (other games include Crystal Ball and Mad Libs). If you don't want to play a game, just tell it to "…entertain me," or say, "...let's have fun." You can even ask it to tell you a joke!



Essential Google Mobile Hardware

The mobile range from Google brings a lot of nice features to the world of smartphones and add-ons. There is also the bonus of getting to use the very latest version of Android as soon as it is released, in the way it was designed to be seen and used.

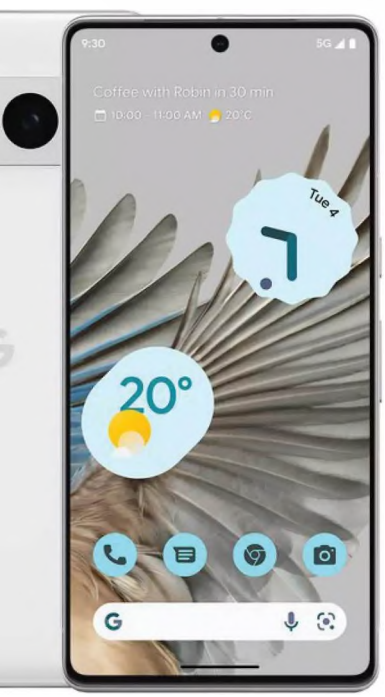
Google Pixel 7

Key Features: The redesigned Pixel 7 and Pixel 7 Pro are here. Powered by our next-generation Google Tensor G2 processor and shipping with Android 13, these phones are at the center of our ever-expanding hardware portfolio that also includes a watch and earbuds. All of these devices come with the smarts you expect from Google and work together to help you.

Pixel 7 and Pixel 7 Pro are sleek, sophisticated and durable. Plus the sleek aluminum enclosure for both phones is made of 100% recycled content, which is a huge plus point.

With a 6.3-inch display and smaller bezels, Pixel 7 is purposefully more compact than Pixel 6 — packing more features and improvements into a smaller profile. Pixel 7 Pro has a 6.7-inch immersive display, a beautiful polished aluminum frame and a camera bar that's perfectly complemented by the three colours.

Final thoughts: A large leap in quality over the Pixel 6, a must.



Dimensions

155.6 x 73.2 x 8.7 mm

Weight

197 g

Display

6.3 in, 1080 x 2400 pixels (416ppi)

Internals

Google Tensor G2, Titan M2 security coprocessor
Memory: 128/256GB RAM: 128GB

Cameras

Front Camera: 10.8 MP
Rear Camera: 50 MP

Connectivity

Wi-Fi: 802.11 a/b/g/n/ac DB
Bluetooth: 5.0

Sim

Dual SIM

Battery

Minimum 4,270 mAh

Google Pixel Watch

Key Features: The Google Pixel Watch, is the first smartwatch to provide the best of Google and Fitbit, and it's the perfect companion to their Pixel phones.

Pixel Watch features a beautiful, custom-developed 3-D coverglass that's durable and scratch resistant, with three distinct jewelry inspired stainless steel finishes in black, silver and gold. Watches are so personal, so they offer many watch bands — active, stretch and woven, metal and leather — along with customizable watch faces and an easily personalizable user interface.

Google Pixel Watch helps simplify your life by integrating with your favorite Google apps, to listen to music, manage your smart home, get directions, make payments and more.

Google Pixel Watch is the first WearOS device that combines Google's helpfulness with best health and fitness insights from Fitbit.

Final thoughts: A real contender to the Apple Watch crown.

Dimensions

41 mm Diameter

Weight

36 g without band

Display

320 ppi AMOLED display with DCI-P3 colour

Brightness boost up to 1,000 nits

Always-on display

Internals

Exynos 9110 SoC

Cortex M33 co-processor

Connectivity

Wi-Fi: 2.4GHz
Bluetooth: 5.0

Battery

294 mAh battery

Google Pixel 6a

Key Features: The Pixel 6a is the smartphone made the Google way. The camera takes a perfect shot every time, while the Google Assistant gets things done with just a squeeze. By featuring Motion Sense technology, you'll be able to control your phone in an intuitive and unique way. Best of all, it's built around the Google software that you know and love, and it's always getting better. The Pixel 6a will help you take fantastic, studio quality photos anywhere, with no editing required, and, with leading low-light capabilities, you can even capture the Milky Way. With Quick Gestures, you have a new way to control your phone. It's great for when you're exercising, cooking, or enjoying your favourite taco. You can change tracks and snooze alarms without touching your phone.
Final thoughts: A great all-round budget smartphone.

Dimensions
71.8 mm x 152.2 mm x 8.9 mm
Weight
178g
Display
6.1-inch)1 display, up to 60Hz
20:9 aspect ratio
Internals
Google Tensor
Titan M2™ security coprocessor

Cameras
Front Camera: 8 MP
Rea12.2 Camera: 8MP
Connectivity
Wi-Fi: 6 802.11 MIMO
Bluetooth: 5.2
Sim
Dual SIM
Battery
4306 mAh

Google Pixel Buds Pro

Key Features: Pixel Buds Pro use Active Noise Cancellation with Silent Seal to adapt to your ear and help block outside sounds, creating a quiet foundation so your music can shine
With custom 11 mm speaker drivers and Volume EQ, the earbuds sound amazing at any volume. The battery keeps up with your life, with up to 11 hours of listening time, or up to 31 hours with the charging case; you can charge them wirelessly with Pixel Stand or other Qi-certified chargers. Transparency mode helps you hear outside sounds in real time so you can be more aware of your surroundings, like when crossing the street Ask Google for directions, respond to a text, or control your music, hands-free. Make crystal clear calls even in loud places thanks to beamforming mics, a voice accelerometer, and wind-blocking mesh covers. Easily switch between compatible devices, so you can go from listening to music on your phone to taking a call on your laptop.
Final thoughts: Quality ear pods with only a few peers.

Dimensions
291 x 202 x 7 mm
Weight
731g
Display
LCD 12.3in, 3000 x 2000 pixels (293ppi)
Internals
CPU: 8th Gen Intel Coe
GPU: Adreno 630
Memory: 128GB RAM: 8GB

Cameras
Main Camera: 8 MP
Selfie Camera: 8MP
Connectivity
Wi-Fi: 802.11 a/b/g/n/ac DB
Bluetooth: 4.2
Battery
48Wh

Google Pixel Tips and Tricks

Google has brought a lot of changes to the Pixel 7 and Pixel 6a phones, including some fundamental ways you navigate and control your device. Let's take a look at some of the main new features of these amazing devices, and how to make the most of them in your day-to-day use.

Accessing Overview

Overview allows you to quickly see and scroll through all of the apps you have been using and that are waiting in the background. To open the Overview, slide your finger upwards over the small pill-shaped button at the bottom on the screen. You can then scroll left and right through the open apps, and even access the settings and search.

Quickly switch between apps

Previously, switching between the last two used apps could be done by double tapping the Recent Apps button. With Pie on your Pixel, this function is still there, but is achieved by swiping left or right over the small Home button. You can also swipe and hold over the button to open a carousel of previously used apps (just like opening the Overview, but done in one motion).

Fingerprint Sensor Gestures

Depending on how you hold your phone, the fingerprint sensor is sometimes easier to reach than the top of the screen. Therefore, for some users it will be easier to use the new fingerprint sensor gestures to open the quick settings panel. Just swipe your finger down over the sensor to open the panel.

Double-Tap to Wake

If you want to be able to quickly see the time, and any notifications you have, but don't like having the Always-on Display running, you can now enable Double-tap to Wake. Quickly tap twice anywhere on the sleeping screen to display the clock and notifications. Head into Settings > Display > Advanced > Ambient display, to turn this on.

Suggestions in Overview

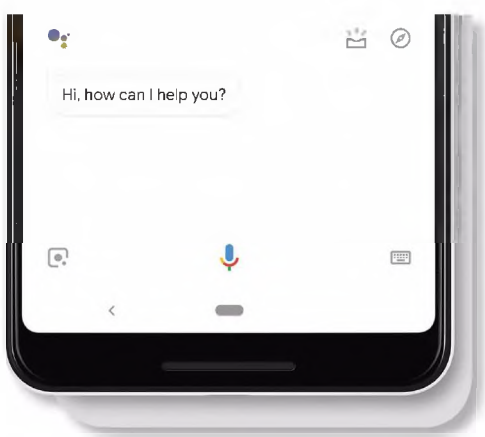
Android Pie brings app suggestions in a couple of places, including in the Overview. App suggestions will vary, depending on what you use most, or what you have been previously been using. To enable suggestions in Overview, open Settings and look for Suggestions.

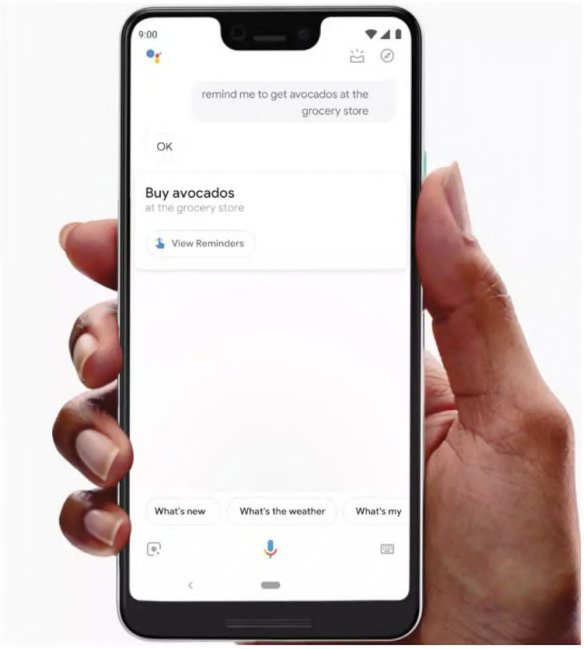
Direct Reply

The latest version of Android on your Pixel allows for Direct replies. This means that you can open the notifications panel, see a message from a contact, hit the reply button and type, without having to leave the notification panel and open the app. This feature needs to be enabled by app developers, so you might not see it all the time, but expect more and more apps to allow it.

Open the App Drawer

In previous versions of Android on Pixel, you opened the main app tray by swiping up from the bottom of the screen. With the new Home and Overview controls, you will need to get used to swiping up a bit further, taking the gesture past where the Overview will open. Try to swipe at least 1/4 of the way up the screen to hit the sweet spot.





Silence with a Squeeze

Google Assistant can be opened by tapping and holding on the Home button for a couple of seconds, just like with most other Android devices. However, the Pixel 3 also lets you open Assistant by squeezing the edges of the phone. You can find the options in settings > system > gestures > active edge.

Sharing Maps

You can share maps via a short URL, an HTML embed, email, text message and even send maps to certain GPS units and cars. To generate a customisable embed code or URL, click on the link icon to the top left of your display. Check the Short URL box (or whatever you require) or click the link for Customise and Preview Embedded Map. If you want to send the link out, rather than copy/paste the text that's been generated, click Send for further options.

Camera Quick Launch

On the Pixel 3, you can double press the power/standby button to quick launch the camera. The settings for this button control can be found in Settings > System > Gestures, where you can turn on "jump to camera" to allow quick access from any screen.

Quick 2x Zoom

If you are taking a photo and want to zoom in on the subject quickly, you can do so by double -tapping on the screen. This performs a 2x zoom, but if you need more, you can still use the zoom slider to get even closer to your target image.

At a Glance

This feature lets you see calendar, weather or other information at the top of the screen "at a glance". You can enable and edit the information here by tapping and holding on the home screen wallpaper, then selecting "Home Screen Settings" and choosing the information you want to be displayed.

Automatically Recognise Songs

Previously available only if the user was currently connected to the Internet to get online, this feature has now been made local, meaning your phone can detect when a song is playing and display information about the song on screen. To enable the Now Playing feature, head into Settings > Sounds > Now Playing.

Accessing the Discover Screen

The Android OS introduced the ability to have an extra page to the left of the Home screen panels some time ago. This has been various things over the years, but on Pixel 6 it is the Discover screen, displaying news topic in a variety of categories. From the main home screen panel, swipe to the right to access it, and then tap the settings icon to customise the content you can view from this location.

Send to Phone

Google Send to Phone enables you to send text messages of Google Maps content to your mobile phone. For example, you might text yourself an address or location you've found.

To send something you've found on Google Maps to your phone, click the link icon in the left panel. Cl ick Send and choose Phone from the left side. Enter the required information and hit Send. You'll receive a text message with your selection. You can also send a local search result to your phone, by clicking More > Send from the place marker's location information window.

Double-Tap to Wake

If you want to be able to quickly see the time, and any notifications you have, but don't like having the Always-on Display running, you can now enable Double-tap to Wake. This allows you to quickly tap twice anywhere on the sleeping screen to display the clock and notifications. Settings > Display > Advanced > Ambient display, to turn it on.

Using My Places

Using My Places, you can create custom, annotated Google Maps that include place marks, lines and shapes. You can even add descriptive text and embed photos and videos in your map; then share your maps with others. This can be handy for mapping out your favourite restaurants, planning an upcoming holiday or saving routes for future reference.

How to Use Google Chromecast

Streaming from the YouTube app can be extremely easy, even if you don't have a Smart TV. Chromecast is a thumb sized media streaming device that plugs into the HDMI port on your TV. Set it up with a simple mobile app, then send your favourite online shows, movies, music and more to your TV using your smartphone, tablet or laptop in 4K. However, that doesn't mean that there aren't more advanced tips and tricks you can use do too.

Set Up Chromecast Hardware

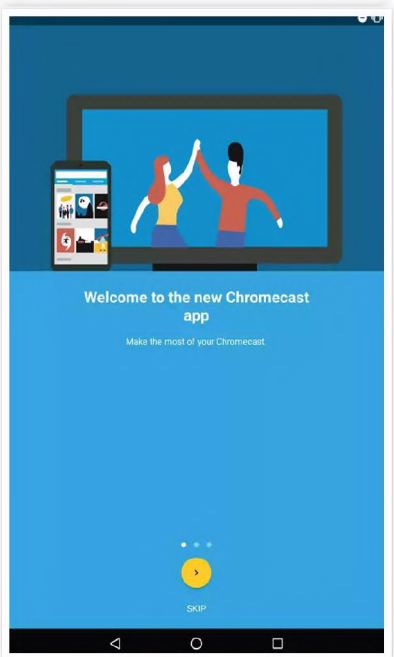
Before you can begin to cast content from your device to your TV or other large screen device, you will need to get the Chromecast hardware connected and set up correctly.

Step 1

Everything you need to get going is included in the Chromecast box. You can plug your Chromecast into any open HDMI input. If you do not have access to a nearby power socket, you can power your Chromecast by plugging the USB power cable directly into an USB port on your TV.

Step 2

Using the cables and adapters that come with the Chromecast is important. To Improve Wi-Fi reception or if you are having trouble slotting the Chromecast into an awkwardly placed HDMI socket, you can use the HDMI extender included.

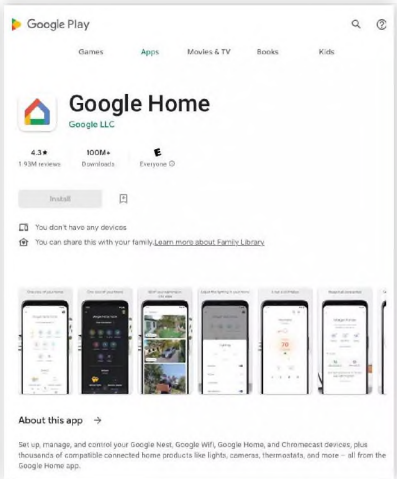


Step 3

Once it is plugged in, you should see the Chromecast home screen. If you do not see the Chromecast home screen on your TV after setting it up, use the Input or Source button on your TV's remote control to change the input until you see the Chromecast home screen.

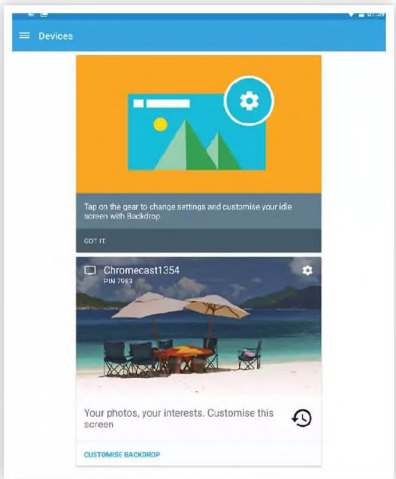
The Google Home App

The official app is not the only way to manage your Chromecast device but it should certainly be the place you start.



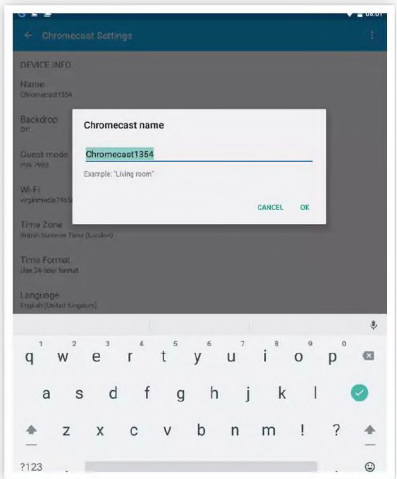
Step 1

Some devices, particularly the Google Nexus ones, may already have the Google Home app, which connects to the hardware plugged into the TV, pre-installed. If not you can download the latest version from the Google Play store.



Step 2

Make sure the device is connected to your Wi-Fi network and then open the Chromecast app. It should automatically begin scanning for devices. Once found it will show your Chromecast in a list, along with any other devices.

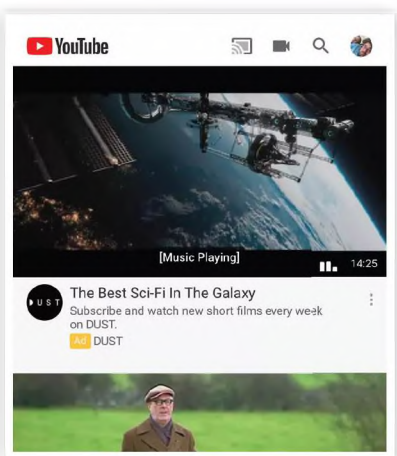


Step 3

Tap next to Chromecast to connect. The screen will change, as will the screen on your TV. This will show a code that needs to match on both the device and the TV. Give your Chromecast a name if you wish, and then tap Done.

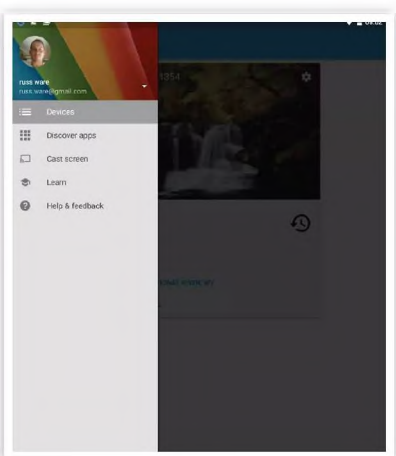
Screen Casting

Many media apps include a dedicated Cast button, used to project movies etc. to your TV. However it is also possible to cast your device screen as well.



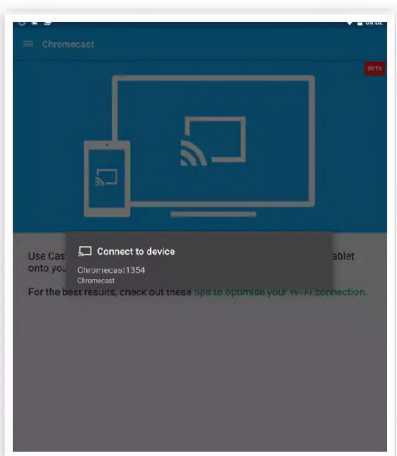
Step 1

You can cast YouTube and all of your favourite apps, from your device to the big screen. Casting allows you to mirror your phone or tablet to the TV so that you can enjoy your great content exactly as you see it on your mobile device.



Step 2

Connect your device to the same Wi-Fi network as your Chromecast and open the its app. In the top left corner, touch the navigation drawer and then tap the Cast Screen button. Select your Chromecast from the list shown.



Step 3

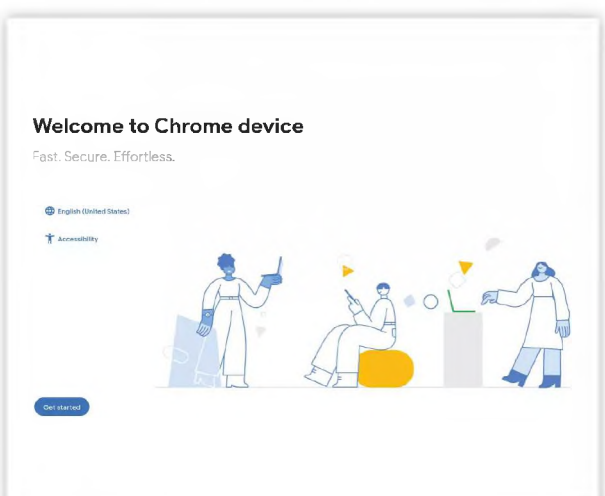
Anything you open on your device will now be cast to your TV via the Chromecast. There are some limitations to using screen cast but in general you can project almost everything from your device to the big screen.

Getting Started With Your Chromebook

You've unwrapped your amazing new Chromebook, took great pleasure in viewing its wonderful contours, brushed aluminium appearence, shiney buttons and the amazingly low price tag! Now it's time to get you set up and logging in with your Google account and start your first steps in your epic Google Chromebook adventure.

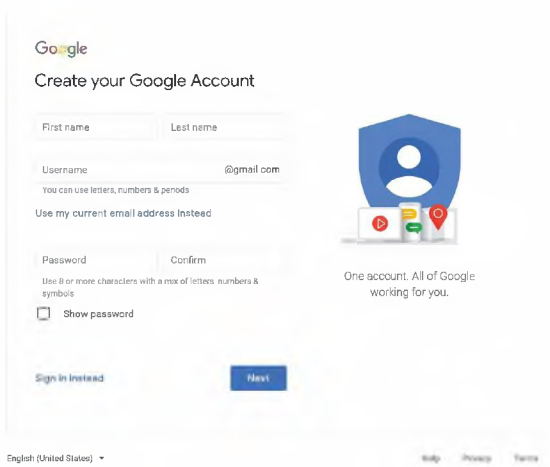
Step 1

The first step is to simply lift your Chromebook lid. Chromebooks are designed to kick things off as soon as you open the lid, so you'll be greeted with a first-time setup. However, you may need to attach the power supply and plug the Chromebook in first. Many come with a brief charge, which may have drained away depending on how long it has been in the box. Hook up the battery, open the lid, and away you go.



Step 2

The first question you'll be asked is if you want to activate ChromeVox. ChromeVox is a screen reader technology that is designed to help those who can't read the information displayed on-screen. You can opt for 'No, continue without ChromeVox', or, 'Yes, activate ChromeVox'; the choice, of course, is yours. Click on the Get Started button, and you'll be asked to setup your Wifi. Locate your home Wifi and enter the login details to connect to the network. Agree to the Google Terms of Service, and click the Accept and Continue button.

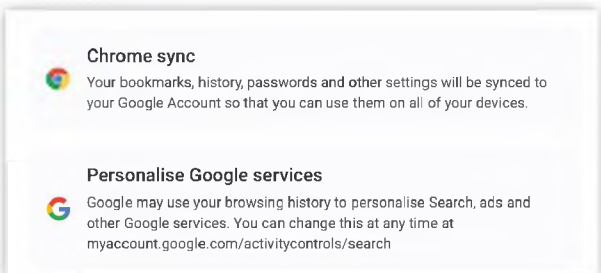


Step 3

Next, you'll be asked who is using the Chromebook. There are two main options: You, or A Child. Clicking You (followed by the Next button) will take you to the account setup step. Clicking A Child will enable you to setup a more guarded environment for younger people to use the internet. There are also options for Enterprise Enrolment and Use as a Guest, but we won't touch the Enterprise option in this instance. After clicking Next, you will be asked to enter your Google account information. There are two ways of doing this. The first is to setup a Google account by opening the following weblink:
https://accounts.google.com/signup/v2/webcreateaccount?hl=en&flowName=GlifWebSignIn&flowEntry=SignUp
from another computer r device, and entering the relevant information; follow the on-screen instructions to complete the setup. Alternatively, you can click the More Option button and create a Google account via the Chromebook. If you already have a Google account as detailed earlier in this publication, enter your email and password in the boxes provided.

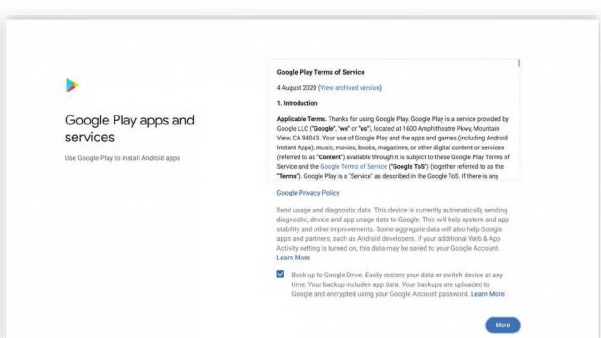
Step 4

Once you've signed in the Chromebook may take a moment to search for any important updates, or preparing the device. This process won't take long – a few seconds – and once it's done you'll be presented with the You're Signed In! welcome message. On this page you'll have a couple of Google-based notices to agree to: Chrome Sync (which synchronises your settings), and Personalise Google Services (which will use your browsing history to personalise ads and so on). These can be reviewed after the setup by clicking on and ticking the 'Review sync options following setup' checkbox. When you're ready, click on the Accept and Continue button.



Step 5

As you will soon see, there's rather a lot of agreements to get through. This page will deal with the Terms of Service regarding Google Play apps and services, alongside the Google Privacy Policy, and an option to Back-Up to your Google Drive area; to restore any data to any Google device whenever you want. Click the More button when you're ready to continue. To more Google Play apps and services agreements. This one will ask you to accept the Back up to Google Drive, as well as allowing apps and services to gain access to your location – or rather your device's location. It also deals with allowing the installation of updates and apps. As with Step 4, you can click the tick box to review the Google Play options following the setup routine. If you're ready to continue, click the Accept button.

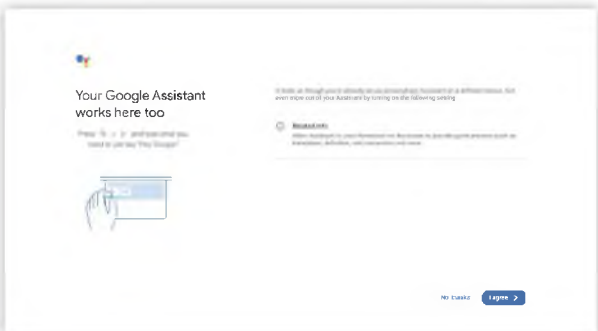


Step 6

From here you can begin to setup the Google Assistant. You'll first be asked if you want to work with the Google Assistant, which you'll need to click on the I Agree button. If you don't want to use the Google Assistant, you won't be able to take advantage of the 'Hey Google' voice commands, complete with voice searching that Chrome OS and Google supplies.

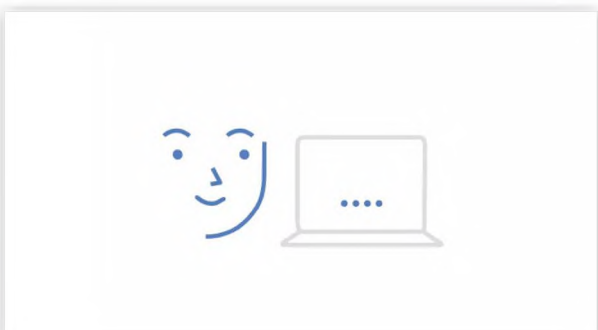
Step 7

You will need to allow the Chromebook to voice match you with the Google Assistant. Once you agree, you will be asked to say 'OK Google' several times, before a final 'Hey Google' to complete the voice pattern matching. As mentioned on the page, 'Hey Google' is only active when connected to a power source by default (which can be changed in the Settings page), and there is a warning that a similar voice could fool the Google Assistant into thinking it's you. When you're ready, click the I Agree button to start the Google Assistant setup.



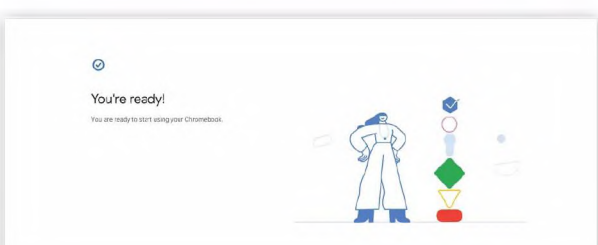
Step 8

If you've used a Google Assistant before, then you'll skip the voice activation part of the setup process – since it already has your voice pattern logged. If not, then when you've finished the voice setup, you'll see a notification page telling you the 'Hey Google' setup is complete and ready to go.



Step 9

That's it! You've made it to the end of the initial setup of the Chromebook. It's now ready to use, personalise and interact with. Simply click on the final Get Started button, and the Chromebook will finalise any settings and present you with the Chrome OS desktop.



The Chromebook Keyboard

The Google Chromebook keyboard layouts are slightly different to that of a traditional Windows laptop, or even a MacBook. To further confuse the issue, some Chromebook manufacturers' keyboards differ from one to the other. However, most will have something that ties to the image you see in the following tutorial. Let's look at what the Google Chromebook keys do and why they do it. With our help you will be in complete control!

1 Forward/Backward Keys

The Forward and Backward keys will move you through any webpages; obviously forwards and backwards through the pages you've already viewed. While it may not seem to revolutionary, once you start using them you'll come to realise how useful they really are.

2 Reload/Refresh

The Reload, or if you prefer, Refresh, key will complete reload a webpage you're currently on. Think of it as hitting the F5 key on a Windows computer or laptop, when you need to quickly refresh and reload the page.

3 Full Screen Mode

Pressing the Full Screen Mode key will open the currently active window on the Chromebook in full screen. Tap it again to shrink it back to its previous size.

4 Display Open Windows

Tapping this key will display all the currently open windows you have. They're displayed in a portrait mode, and you can use the touchpad mouse, or the arrow keys to cycle between each individual window; pressing Enter will bring the highlighted window to forefront.

5 Display Brightness Keys

These two keys will decrease and increase the brightness levels of the display. There's a GUI indicator on-screen that will show you the levels of brightness as you tap these keys.

6 Volume Keys

As expected, these two keys will mute the Chromebook's sound, decrease the volume and increase the volume. Again, a graphical level will display the current volume setting.

7 Lock Screen

Pressing and holding this key will enable the Chromebook and Chrome OS screen lock. You'll need to enter your login password into the box provided to unlock the Chromebook. Ensure you do this if you're going to be away from your computer.

8 Search Key

Pressing the Search Key (the magnifying glass), will open the Chrome OS Search Function. From here, you're able to search for files and folders stored on your Chromebook, emails, apps from the Google Play Store, YouTube videos, and even settings from within Chrome OS. This is also known as the Everything Button, and links directly to the Launcher.

The Chromebook Desktop Explained

Are you ready to dive into Google's Chrome OS operating system, which is unique to the Chromebook itself, are you ready to see how much this amazing device can actually do? To access the host of functionality that Google have placed under the hood, you are going to need to fully understand how to use the Chrome OS desktop first.

1 Background/Wallpaper

As with any other operating system, Chrome OS features a customisable background, or wallpaper, for you to change and personalise. There are plenty available from within Chrome OS itself, including works of art, fantasy, and even solid colours; you're also able to include your own images.

2 Welcome Page

When you first log into Chrome OS you're presented with a welcome page. This includes details and quick tutorials on how to accomplish the most frequently used tasks within the operating system. It's worth spending a few minutes going through what the Welcome Page has to offer, to help familiarise yourself with the new OS.

3 Searching & Apps

Still within the Launcher, you can enter anything into the text box provided to search the files stored on the Chromebook, your emails, YouTube videos, and even the Google Play Store. This is also where any 'Hey Google' requests are processed. If you were say, 'Hey Google, what's the weather like tomorrow?', the results will be displayed in the Launcher – or opened as a separate window depending on the request, but the actual command is handled by the Launcher. If you click the up-pointing arrow at the top-middle of the Launcher, the window will fill the screen and you can view all the currently installed apps on the Chromebook.

4 The Launcher (Everything button)

This is called the Launcher, or the Everything Button, it's not always taking up so much room on the desktop, we simply activated it to show you what it looks like. To open the Launcher, you tap the Search key on your Chromebook keyboard (the magnifying glass), or you use the Touchpad to click the circle in the bottom-left of the main desktop area.

5 The Shelf

The bar below the Launcher is called the Shelf. This is a quick-launch app, file and folder shortcut launcher similar to that found on macOS, and some Linux distros. The default apps: Chrome, Files, Gmail, Google Docs, YouTube and the Google Play Store, can all be changed and removed, and it's easy to Pin new apps, files and folders, to the Shelf. The Rocket Ship icon, by the way, is the Welcome Page that's currently open on the desktop. Any open apps are displayed in the Shelf for easy access when you're switching windows.

6 Notifications, Settings, and More

The Wifi, battery level and time icons in the bottom-right of the Shelf can be clicked to reveal a lot more. In here you'll find any recent notifications you've not dismissed, your current profile image, the option to Sign Out of the Chrome OS as well as Shutdown or Restart the Chromebook. There are also options to lock the screen, enter the Chrome OS Settings pages, change Wifi network, enable or disable Bluetooth, capture the screen, turn the Night Light on or off, increase volume and display brightness.

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